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Captain Waltham in the Saddle.

Captain Waltham.

FRONTISPIECE.

See page 7.

CAPTAIN WALTHAM:

A TALE OF SOUTHERN INDIA.



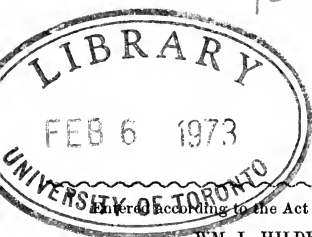
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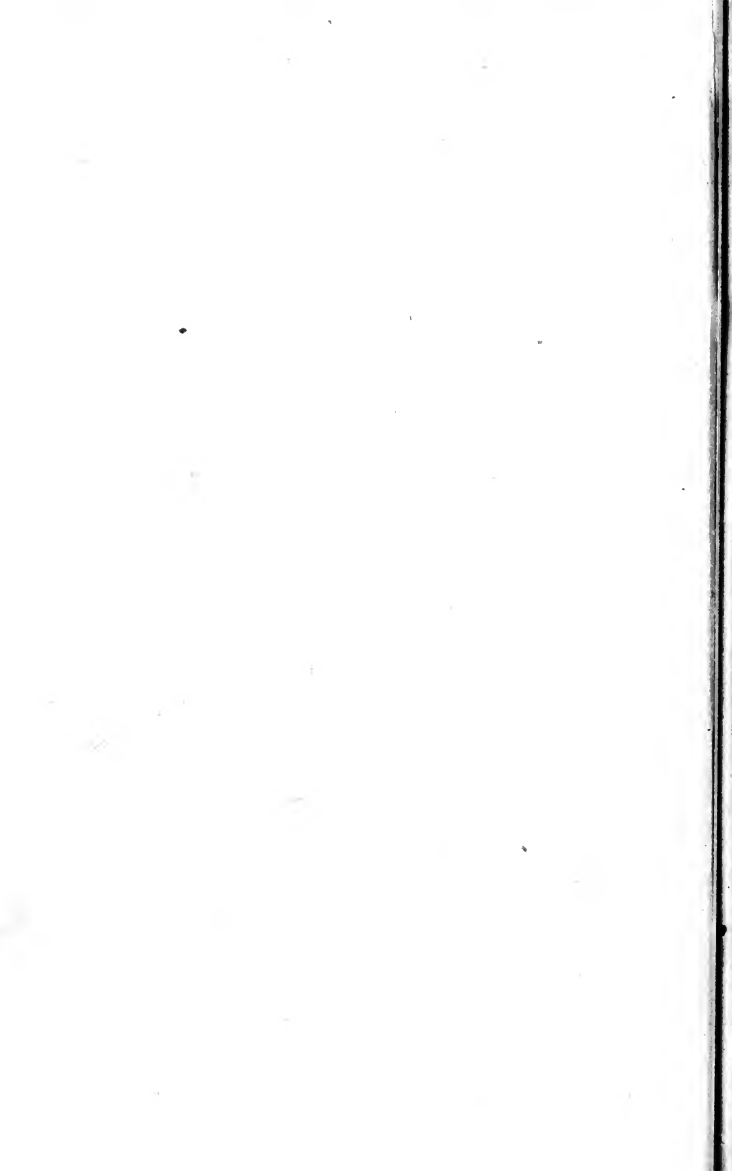
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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE life-like view of society in Southern India, which the reader will find in CAPTAIN WALTHAM, could have been given only by one whom years of residence had familiarized with the whole atmosphere of that most peculiar land. The date of the narrative is a little earlier than the great Sepoy mutiny, (even caste-bound India changes in this changeful age,) and groups in vivid yet strictly true coloring the Englishman, civil and military, the missionary and the Hindoo. The picture presented is characteristically a *Southern* Indian one. Had the story been of Bengal, Agra or Bombay, its characters and incidents would have varied with the variation of these widely-separated parts of a vast combination of nations in one mass of nearly two hundred millions of souls. The illustrations, by Davenport, like the text, are true to Indian life.

J. W. D.





CAPTAIN WALTHAM.

CHAPTER I.

THE violent storms that mark a change of monsoon are over, and the South Indian landscape looks fresh and green under the rising rays of a December sun. The temperature is such that, for a few weeks, Europeans may enjoy life in a country where at other seasons they only endure it. The days are cool and balmy, the nights are favorable to refreshing sleep.

So Captain Waltham thinks ; and accordingly he slumbers on while his bungalow doors and windows are being flung wide open to admit the early breeze. But now a young man, dressed in

the flowing robes of a Hindu servant, carries into the bedroom a cup of hot coffee; and very soon the Captain appears on the verandah, ready for his morning ride. As he stands for a moment caressing his horse, let us photograph him on the spot. His figure is by no means that of a representative John Bull. Ten years in India have greatly hindered the "development of adipose tissue," leaving, indeed, almost too thin a veil of flesh between his inner self and the outer world. His face betrays a sensitive nature. Eye, nostril and lip, all tell of a temper proud and high, made still more hasty by the irritating incidents of life within the tropics, yet kept under control by strong principle. For his costume, he, of course, does not this morning wear the scarlet coat of a British officer, since he is going merely for a comfortable ride. Unmilitary though it may seem, his spurs are certainly buckled over canvas shoes, made clean each day by whiting, not by blacking. His clothes are of light color and thin fabric; his gloves are white, and his white pith hat, made after the model of a Grecian hel-

met, not only shades his eyes, but screens his neck behind from any possible exposure to the sun. And now the Captain springs into the saddle and is off.

Illathapet is one of the prettiest villages of Southern India. Here is held the chief court of the district, and the European residents are more than a few. Pretty cottages of Anglo-Indian architecture nestle amid gardens of tropical verdure. The streets wind in graceful curves, like the carriage drives of an English park, and, like them, are smooth and clean. Why not? Huge rollers, dragged by government elephants, level them newly now and then; and a fresh top-dressing of fine, clean gravel is flattened down, inch after inch, by chain-gang felons from the jail, stepping with no less than military precision under the watchful eye and gleaming sword of a Hindu police-peon, and dropping their long-handled mallets perpendicularly, in rhythmic concord, step by step, along their slow and tedious way. Yes, very smooth indeed are the roads over which the gentlemen of the station take

their morning ride; and smooth they are at nightfall, when languid ladies lean wearily back in their phætons, during the evening drive which never brings again to their sallow cheeks the roses they wore in England.

But Captain Waltham did not think of the roads on the morning of which we speak. His eye wandered to a clear sheet of water close at hand. Tall, slender bamboo-trees, loving the moisture, bordered its farther edge, with now and then a graceful spray of younger growth, drooping over the very brink and looking at its own image in the depths below. Nearer by, the dark and glossy greenness of a cocoa-grove contrasted with the pale and feathery verdure of the light bamboos beyond, while in the far distance the eye caught the dim, blue outline of a bold and rugged hill—advance guard of the range called Eastern Ghâts. Only one glance gave Waltham toward the distant hill, and then his eye rested close at hand upon the channels dug by the ryots for leading off small streams to water the rice-fields, now looking dimly green upon their beds

of mud. Yes, a village so directly under the English eye must be supplied with water. But how with the villages farther away?

Waltham was not at this time on regimental duty. He had lived at Illathapet, a civil station, only since gaining the position of a government engineer.

“If only that answer would come!” thought he. “So many days of this fine season I am losing! Red tape!” And of little else he thought until a turn of several miles brought him round to his own door. Within his dressing-room a clean, fresh suit was laid out, and the bath was ready in the room beyond. His toilet duties over, the Captain spent a half hour in retirement, seeking a strength beyond his own to aid in curbing his unruly temper; and then he came out to the breakfast-table. Lying beside his plate he found his morning mail. One envelope, looking like the long-wished-for document, was opened instantly, and the Captain’s face brightened as he read.

“Boy!” cried he to the servant in waiting,

“send to the Cotwal for three common carts with bullocks. Tell the Lascars to be ready at once with my tent-luggage!”

“Yes, sir.”

“And, boy, order trotting-bullocks for my bandy; one pair to be posted at once half-way to Chinnacotta, and one pair to be sent here after dark. Have my bandy packed by nine o’clock to-night. I dine out this evening, but shall return early.”

“Yes, sir.”

“And tell Mootooswamy that he goes with me—you stay in charge of the house. Give Mootooswamy money for three weeks’ supplies. Now go; send Chinnian to me while you are out.”

“Yes, sir,” said the servant; and leaving the room he sent in Chinnian to stand behind his master’s chair. The Captain having at leisure read his letters and disposed of an egg, a slice of toast, a cocoanut appam and a cup of tea, retired to sort his papers for the journey. As to packing his clothes, that was a matter which he left en-

tirely with the servant who had taken orders for Mootooswamy and the Lascars—the same who had brought him coffee at the hour of rising. But who is this servant? If he be either a Pariah or a caste Hindu, why do his fellows call him by the English nickname “Billy?” I asked the Captain this question once, and he replied :

“Billy? Ah, poor fellow!—East Indian, in spite of his native dress. You remember the little fort of Yengoor, I dare say? Perhaps you know that there is a Catholic mission-chapel there, and a French Jesuit priest. Twenty years ago, more or less, this priest married an English soldier to a young native woman of the place. A year after the soldier was sent to Burmah with his regiment, and there he died. His native wife had died before, in giving birth to a little boy, who was called Billy by his father’s fellow-soldiers.

“When poor Billy was perhaps fifteen years old, I saw him first. I was with my regiment then, and we were quartered for a time at Yengoor. One day my butler brought me a half-starved

little wretch, yellow and pock-marked. This was Billy. He begged for work enough to earn one meal a day—his Pariah grandmother could give him one more. I thought we had servants enough, but I pitied the little vagabond, and so I went and asked Laura what she thought. (My dear wife was living then,” explained the Captain with a sigh.) “She thought he might run errands for the cook, and so we took him. Of all lying, thievish little wretches, this boy at first was chief. Laura undertook to reform him by moral means. She sent him three hours a day to mission-school, for by that time our wanderings had brought us here, and Laura made acquaintance with the missionaries at once. She also had him sit on the verandah and learn verses of Scripture, all about thieves and liars. At last she began to fancy him improved, and proposed cultivating his sense of honor by trusting him now and then to go the store-room for supplies as they were wanted by the cook. He never seemed to pilfer on such occasions, though once he carelessly left the key in the lock, where I ob-

served it shortly after ; and then, on Laura's asking for it, he made some pretence for a moment's absence, after which he came back and said it had been hanging at his waist all the time. Here was lying again, so Laura's moral suasions were called for once more. I superadded an appeal of my own invention. 'Billy,' said I, 'they tell me your father was an English soldier. Now, among white people it is a point of honor and manliness when one has committed a fault to confess it boldly, and not lie about it like a coward.' This hint of mine seemed to make a deep impression. I suppose it was the first time his pater-nity had been mentioned to him as a probable advantage, for you know how these unfortunate Eurasians are despised by Europeans and Asiatics alike.

"But I must tell you the last of his thieveries. Though his sense of honor already kept him from pilfering when sent to the store-room for supplies, yet he seemed to think that everything not specifically entrusted to his honor was fair game for his thievish fingers.

“One night Laura was quite ill. The doctor had been with her during the evening, and was to call again next morning. But thinking it might perhaps be necessary to send for him during the night, I had ordered Billy to spread his mat on the verandah floor ; so there he lay before my door in all his usual clothes, turban and everything quite ready. About midnight I concluded to send for the doctor, and so, standing at the door, I called Billy by name. Though I almost shouted the second and third time, yet the boy never once stirred, so deep were his slumbers. I then reached down and shook his arm. He sprang up in such haste that off fell his turban and out rolled three of my best cheroots, for I smoked in those days. We both looked down at the cheroots, and next into each other’s faces, and then, without a word or a syllable, Billy dropped at my feet in a dead faint. I sent another servant for the doctor, and then came back to Billy. He was so long in recovering that I was out of my wits with the fear that he was dead. But after I had drenched him with

cold water, and fairly blistered his nostrils with hartshorn, Billy opened his eyes, and in a moment cried out, 'Send me to the police! I stole master's cheroots! Send me to the police!'

"I considered the matter, and then said, 'Billy, if I send you to the police, your name is gone. Suppose I give you another trial?'

"He looked so grateful, with those deep, black eyes, poor fellow! But in a moment he cried, 'Don't tell missis, sir! If missis knows, she will never look at me again!'

"I paused a little, and then said, 'Billy, suppose I promise not to tell missis about the cheroots until you are caught thieving again?'

"'Then I will never steal again, sir! No, never!' And I verily believe he has kept his word.

"It was a new thing for me to hide anything from my wife, but for Billy's sake I did not expose his theft, though Laura found what it had been, two years later, from something I said to Mr. Beverly.

"When my dear Laura died, I began to re-

duce my establishment, and my butler proposed going himself to Madras, recommending that Billy should be put in his place at the head of my servants. So Billy is now my chief household manager, and I could very ill spare him, nor do I think he would ever wish to leave me."





CHAPTER II.

WALTHAM'S evening engagement was merely for a quiet family dinner with the Stanleys. He had met Mrs. Stanley that morning, and she had simply stopped, in passing, to say: "Young Mr. Sayle is with us for three days, while his bungalow is fitting up, and I must confess we find him stupid. Cannot you in pity make the fourth at our dinner-table this evening? You know I must not give a large dinner-party so soon after poor Mr. Morton's bereavement." And the Captain had said yes.

Mr. Stanley was judge of the district court. He had been a member of the Honorable East India Company's Civil Service for perhaps a score of years. Although of a good family, he had risen to his present position more by his own merits

than through the influence of his friends at home. He had gained more than a superficial acquaintance with Sanscrit, the sacred language of the Hindus, and had familiarized himself with the usages which prevailed in India in the ancient days, when Brahminism was the faith of the rulers. With equal diligence he had studied the Arabic and the Persian, together with the laws established in India by the Mohammedan conquerors of the eighth century. The fact that interpreters are required, as a matter of form, in Indian courts of justice, had not been deemed by Mr. Stanley an excuse for neglecting to cultivate the vernacular languages of the land in which he dwelt, and he had so far mastered the legal modifications introduced by the East India Company as to find less perplexity than one would fancy in administering the medley of Hindu, Mohammedan and English law dealt out in the Company's courts.

When Waltham entered Mrs. Stanley's drawing-room that evening, he found Mr. Sayle with his host and hostess. An introduction was neces-

sary, as Sayle had but recently arrived. Then Mrs. Stanley said,

“And so, Captain, rumor was wrong in sending you off at sunset for a six months’ absence, without one apology for forfeiting a dinner engagement?”

“I leave at nine or ten to-night,” said Waltham, “and expect to be absent two or three weeks only, so that it seemed unnecessary to make calls, or even to send my card. Stay, I did call for a moment on Mrs. Beverly, to see whether I was likely to meet her husband. It seems he has taken nearly the same route I propose for myself.”

“Ah, Mr. Sayle,” cried Mrs. Stanley, “there is another name for your visiting list—Mr. Beverly.”

“Aw—I should be happy,” said Sayle. “Beverly? aw—of the Civil Service, I dessay?”

Now, had Sayle only listened to the previous conversation, even his stupidity must have remarked that whatever position Mr. Beverly held, he was evidently a friend of those present.

But he had been occupied in studying the impression he himself produced on Waltham; therefore, when Mrs. Stanley replied, "No, Mr. Beverly is a missionary," the youthful civilian determined to produce a profound effect by manifesting the exclusiveness of his social tastes. Accordingly, after a moment spent in arranging his ideas, he asked,

"Aw—beg pardon—am I expected to—aw—to exchange calls with—aw—with persons of that sort?"

Mrs. Stanley was dumb, Mr. Stanley's lip quivered; as for Waltham, he had with his usual quickness gauged young Sayle and pronounced him "snobbish." So he replied, mischievously,

"Oh, certainly! You will find yourself received with perfect affability."

Sayle looked puzzled and stupid, but before he could frame a reply the Hindoo butler appeared to announce dinner, and Waltham escorted Mrs. Stanley to the dining-room, followed by Mr. Stanley and young Sayle.

And now the cares of the day were over to

these English dwellers in a foreign land. Perhaps dinner might convey to them a faint reminiscence of the old home-life. And yet within the tropics, an English home could not be minutely copied. Thus, Mr. Stanley's dining-room gave you the idea of airiness and spaciousness so necessary in that burning climate. The subdued light of lamps fed with fragrant cocoanut oil lent an Oriental charm that would have been dispelled by flaring gas. The four comfortable arm-chairs, on the four sides of the ample table, suggested the languor that attends even the act of taking food in a country where punkas, hanging from the ceiling, are swung to and fro to fan you as you eat. The distance of each seat from every other showed how entirely the labor of passing food would be performed by the black genii flitting hither and thither in ghostly silence. These four servants, dressed in flowing robes of white, their heads crowned with snowy turbans, stepped softly about the matted floor with bare feet, since Oriental etiquette, the reverse of Occidental, kept them from entering their master's presence with

uncovered head or covered feet. They might walk the streets with sandals, but on entering the house must put off their shoes from their feet, like Moses when he found himself standing unawares on holy ground. Each servant prided himself on silently anticipating the slightest want of the master or the guest behind whose chair he stood. Now and then a signal might pass between the butler and another servant, but as to any motion of the lips, they might all have been deaf-mutes.

Sayle, sitting opposite Waltham, was intent on impressing him by his deportment. So numerous were his graceful flourishes that he nearly thrust an elbow into the thick yellow contents of a plate of muligatawny soup that a servant was bringing him. But this discomposing incident being apparently unnoticed, his spirits soon revived. By the time the carving was despatched, Sayle had laboriously framed another remark, which he now addressed to his vis-à-vis :

“I was not aware that—aw—that persons like the one you mentioned were—aw—were entitled

to receive notice from members of the Civil Service."

Now Waltham had nearly forgotten the incident in the drawing-room, but on hearing this remark, the same in substance with one Sayle had made before, he became sarcastic. "I am afraid," said he, "that I shall myself be excluded from the honor of your notice, Mr. Sayle."

The other, bowing, deemed himself honored by the acquaintance of—aw—of a gentleman whose friends—aw—held so high a position in India as those of Captain Waltham.

Not one whit mollified, the Captain answered, "Whatever position my friends in India hold, I can assure you that my friends at home are by no means the social superiors of Mr. Beverly's."

"Can it be," thought Sayle, "that he knows who and what *my* friends are?" and he found his appetite failing. He was sorry the saddle of mutton had tempted him, and thought he could have eaten with more relish some slices of capon flanked by a shaving of boiled tongue. Even the green peas and young potatoes, which are

grown only during the coldest part of the Indian year, now seemed quite tasteless to the disheartened Sayle.

The Captain was by this time chatting with Mrs. Stanley, and everything unpleasant would have been forgotten but for the infatuation of Sayle, who, in the very next pause, mustered his wits to say,

“It’s very nice, I’m sure, to hear that this—aw—this Mr.—aw—Beverly is so well connected. I only thought perhaps he had—aw—broken with his friends, you know, in sinking to such a position.”

“It is a position which keeps him in poverty, I grant,” cried the Captain, fast losing self-control; “but then it is scarcely English to ignore good birth because it is not accompanied by a long purse. On the contrary, if a man has no blood and no brains, and nothing but dirty money, he is likely to be a SNOB!”

While Waltham thus relieved his indignation, Sayle’s servant, having brought him a hot-water plate and a plump teal, was holding in readiness

the usual condiments, cayenne and a lime. Sayle's agitation was increasing with every emphatic word, and when the Captain came down forcibly on the epithet "snob," the young man fairly trembled. Seizing the half lime, he gave it a desperate squeeze with such an utterly careless aim that the juice shot suddenly into his eye. Still, as before, good breeding on the part of others prevented any notice of his awkwardness, and in a moment Sayle was smiling under his tortures and trying to look as if nothing were the matter.

The Captain was already repenting his own warmth. Meantime Mr. Stanley quietly remarked:

"Mr. Beverly is a gentleman of such ability and culture that he might have risen faster in worldly distinction than any of us, had he chosen a secular pursuit. But the position he occupies is one which *he* cannot honor so much as it honors *him*, or would honor any one of us, did we dare to consider ourselves worthy of filling it."

This remark deepened poor Waltham's contrition. "Ah," he thought, "how much better

a Christian is Stanley than I! He can defend an absent friend without losing temper!" Waltham was warm and generous in friendship, but sometimes too hasty in resentment—a fault we often see in these otherwise lovable men of impulsive natures.

As for Sayle, he had profoundly reflected in this wise: "Fancy all these people having a weakness for pious persons! I'm off their books now, I dessay."

But already Mrs. Stanley's pleasant chat was soothing wounded feeling. The remaining courses were duly despatched, and at length Sayle serenely trifled with the dark green lime-leaf floating in his finger-glass, without the faintest reminiscence of the lime-juice in his eyes an hour before.

When the gentlemen followed Mrs. Stanley to the drawing-room, they found her sorting music at the piano.

"Have you tried the song I sent you?" asked Waltham.

"Yes—you shall have it after coffee," said the lady.

"Unfortunately, after coffee I must excuse myself at once."

"Then I will sing it when you return from your tour; but I am not in voice so soon after dinner. Besides, I must tell you of my last box from home. There are piles of books for little Kate, who scarcely knows a letter."

"Books will keep, if you do not let the white ants eat them."

"Yes; there is a book of fables. I must repeat one fable now. A giant was annoyed with a fly which persisted in settling on his foot after being often driven away. So he took a sledgehammer and killed the fly, but in doing so he bruised himself."

The Captain colored. Mrs. Stanley glanced down the room to make sure that Sayle's ear was occupied by what his host was saying. Then she resumed,

"The moral is this: we must sometimes put down impertinence, but when doing so we should always keep our temper."

"Ah, Mrs. Stanley, you know I always let

you tell me of my faults. As to Stanley, he lectures me indirectly by being a better man than I."

"Never mind," said the lady; "you know I lecture only those who are likely to improve. There are some whom nothing could alter. I let all such alone, on Solomon's principle, 'Though thou shouldst bray a fool among wheat in a mortar with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.' All such cases I deliver over to the unwearied forbearance of my husband. See there! how patient he is with them!" And glancing down the room once more, her eye rested sympathizingly upon the much-enduring Zillah judge.





CHAPTER III.

IN the Captain's return from Mr. Stanley's he found that Billy had everything ready for the journey. His traveling-coach stood with its end toward the verandah. Like an omnibus, it had a door behind and seats along each side. But, in addition, it had a framework fitted across the open part between the seats, thus converting the entire space, from side to side and end to end, into a broad platform, under which baggage was stowed, and upon which were now arranged mattresses and pillows for a night journey. In short, it was like a sort of ambulance. Though large and strong, it was so built as to be lighter than it seemed. Like other bullock-coaches, it ran on two wheels, but was so well balanced that the oscillations were not disagreeably marked.

The Captain having exchanged his dinner-suit for his dressing-gown and Turkish cap, entered his bandy and stretched himself out upon the mattresses and pillows. Then Mootooswamy mounted outside with the driver, and the bullocks were started off in a gentle trot. These beautiful creatures were of the Mysore breed—slender in the legs, and equal to a pace of six miles an hour if not driven too long at a time.

All that night the journey was so quiet that Waltham slept most of the way. At sunrise he had reached Chinnacotta; but as the only Englishman residing here was now absent for a few days, Waltham halted for breakfast at the travelers' bungalow. Here Mootooswamy, taking from the bandy various utensils and provisions, soon made ready a breakfast of cold fowl and ham, French roll and hot coffee. Meantime the Captain, in the little bath-room of the bungalow, refreshed himself by his usual ablutions, for the meanest rest-house in India can boast its bath, even should all other conveniences be wanting.

The object of this journey was to note the sup-

ply of water for irrigation throughout the district. The Captain spent his nights in traveling and his days in making the necessary inquiries and observations. Wherever no better shelter was to be expected, his Lascars were sent forward to pitch his tents. In this manner he had spent over two weeks, and was proceeding homeward by the direct route, when an unexpected incident occurred to vary the monotony of his night journeys.

It was clear moonlight, and the bullocks he had engaged at the last station were getting over the ground at a very good pace. The Captain noticed that the road was beginning to wind among little hillocks, but the cattle were in good condition, and the driver, newly hired that evening, was in good spirits. Accordingly, he himself was settling down to sleep, when his ear caught a faint sound as of an outcry among the undulating hills, and at the next curve of the road he saw a native rushing toward his bandy, screaming as he ran. At sight of the coach, the fugitive shouted "Thieves ! thieves !" and then stood dancing up and down and wringing his hands.

"Ask what is the matter," said Waltham to Mootoswamy and the driver, who presently reported—

"He says the thieves are murdering his master."

"Well, then, hurry up," said the Captain.

"But, sir," cried the driver, "we shall be murdered, too!"

"Nonsense! I have my pistols ready loaded. Drive on, and you shall see one white man chase a gang of thieves. Here, you, whoever you are, climb up behind my bandy, on the steps. Why! what's this? Are you Mr. Beverly's servant?"

"Yes, sir; the robbers have upset the bandy, beaten my master and carried off everything!"

"Drive on, then!" cried the Captain; "make a dreadful clamor, every one of you. Let them think a hundred police-peons are coming!" And with shout and hurrah he cheered the timid trio of natives. The bullocks were started into a gallop, and presently the Captain came in sight of the overturned bandy. By the roadside sat Mr. Beverly, quietly wiping his temples. The

moonlight showed his handkerchief stained with blood.

“My dear Beverly,” cried the Captain, springing from his coach, “you are badly hurt!”

“I think not,” said Mr. Beverly.

“But your temples?” asked Waltham.

“My head is certainly rather dizzy,” said the other, “but the blood was all from my nose, I think.”

Waltham knelt down to examine. “I can find no gash,” said he, “and your nose does not bleed at present. I suppose the rascals have really taken themselves off?”

“Yes; I fancy they heard your shouts sooner than I, for they fled of a sudden, before I could discover the reason.”

“Mootooswamy,” said the Captain, “bring my medicine-chest and my brandy-flask from the right-hand corner in the bottom of the bandy.” Then turning to Mr. Beverly, he added, “I can supply everything, even to a bandage for your head, if you care for it. Ah, here is my medicine-chest—will you take some brandy?”

“No, thank you. I shall do better with a few drops of liquid hartshorn in a little water, and some of the hartshorn on my temples.”

The Captain having duly administered the hartshorn, externally and internally, next asked, “How did all this happen?”

“I was getting on at a very steady pace, when, just as the winding of the road brought us under the brow of this hillock, a sudden shower of stones from above put the driver and cattle in a panic. Then a dozen men or so rushed down, upset the bandy and dragged me out. My head struck the steps, and my nose bled freely.”

“Your boy said they gave you a beating.”

“No; I believe that is frequently done by these fellows; but on me they practiced no other violence than rough handling. In ransacking my coach, they first pounced on my medicine-chest and made off with it.”

“They should drink the laudanum at a draught, and swallow the calomel at a dose!” cried the Captain.

Mr. Beverly laughed: “They do believe in

powerful doses, yet I cannot wish them to poison themselves. More likely, when they pry open the box and discover its contents, they will drop it in disgust. Its weight led them to hope for rupees. I found from their talk that they had been watching for some government official, whom they expected this way with a fabulous amount of silver."

"If they meant me," said Waltham, "report must have greatly belied me, as I seldom traveled with less. Still, I fear you have received harm that was meant for me, and I cannot tell you how I regret it."

"Thanks; but the harm is very little, after all. When my parcels are gathered together, I doubt if anything besides my medicine-chest will be missing."

Said Waltham: "You must make the rest of the journey with me. I should reach Chinna-cotta at sunrise, and we may be at home by sunset. My bandy is wide enough for two, and yours will be no better for the upsetting. My luggage-carts should soon be up. I had but just

overtaken and passed them when your servant met me. Listen now; do you not hear the sound?" And presently the foremost cart came up.

Mr. Beverly's bandy was speedily set upon its wheels, and found capable of being taken on at the pace of the luggage-carts. Accordingly, its owner accepted Waltham's invitation, and the two gentlemen were soon on their way again in the larger coach. "And now," said Waltham, "I hope we may at last have a quiet night. If I remember rightly, we shall presently leave these hillocks behind, and the rest of the road is a level track, running over unfenced fields."

This proved true, and as the coach rolled smoothly on, its occupants conversed for an hour or more, until interrupted by the sound of a dispute between Mootooswamy and the driver.

"I say the road goes straight on," said the driver.

"Yes, Appa, but they have ploughed and planted over it, so we must drive around the edge of the field," said Mootooswamy.

“They have no right to plough and plant over the road,” said the driver; “and if I turn out, it will be sunrise before we are at Chinnacotta, and then I shall get only common pay; but if we are there at sunrise, I shall have my pay and *enam* too.”

“You cannot go straight on,” said Mootoo-swamy. “See what a ridge they have thrown up to keep us from crossing the ploughed ground. I will not have my master’s bandy driven over that ridge.”

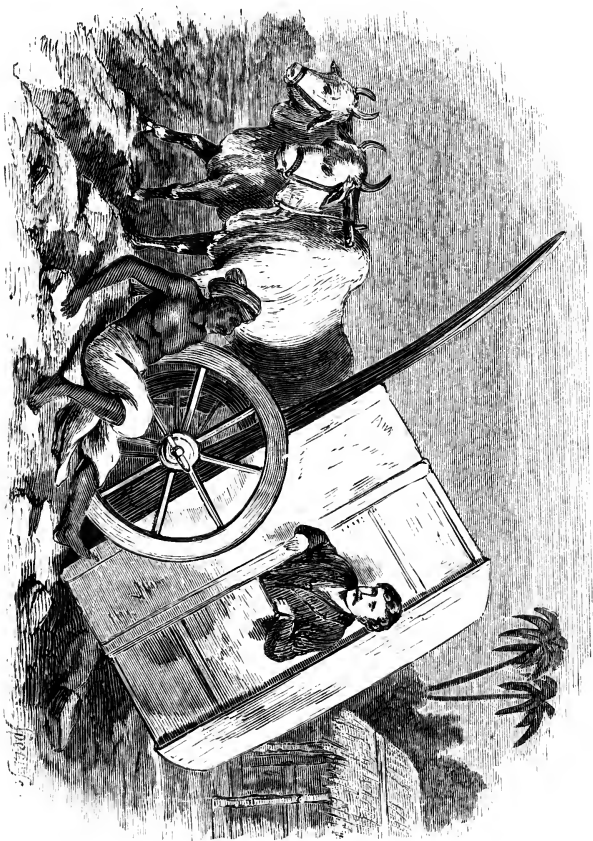
“’Tis nothing at all,” said the driver. “Up, up! my fine creatures—my rajahs!” he cried to his bullocks, accompanying these honeyed words with a vigorous blow that made them start with a jerk.

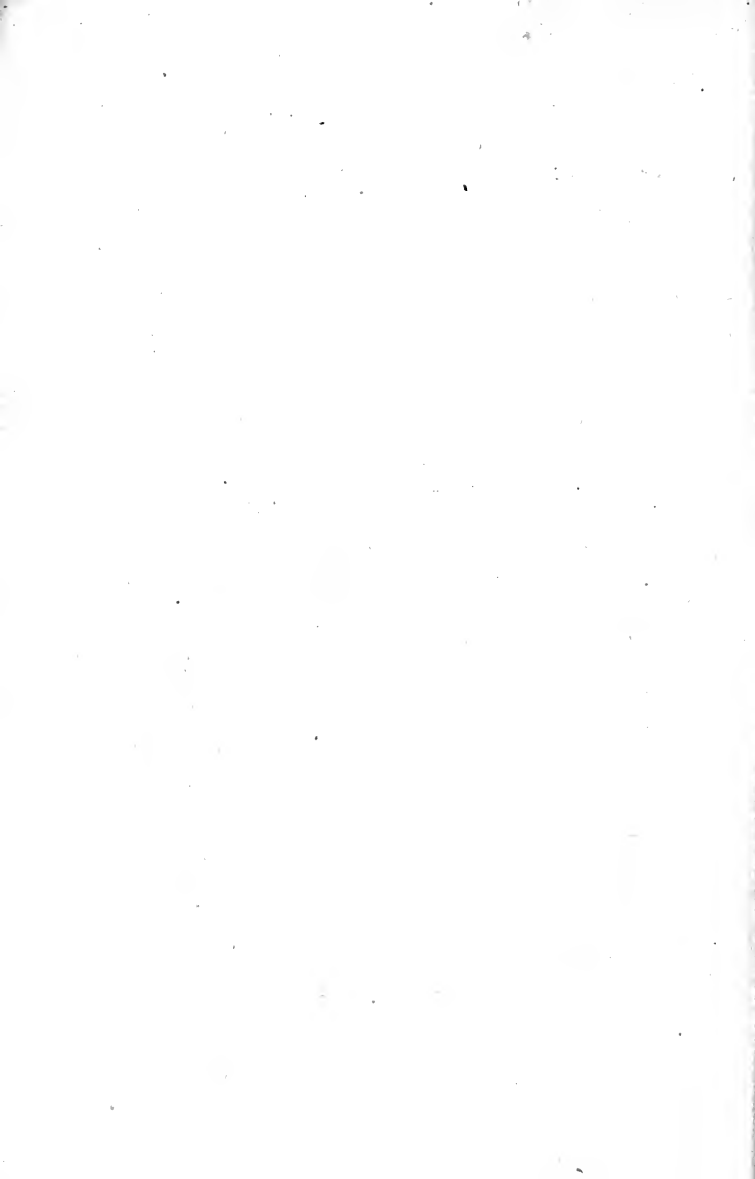
Gentle reader, I do confess that one disadvantage appertains to coaches on two wheels. Did you ever, when in the country, see the oxen unyoked from a common cart? Then you have noticed its propensity to turn down in front at once; or, if the unyoking were awkwardly performed, the cart would even tip backward, with the tongue

pointing up into the air. To any one sitting inside such a sudden reversing of position would be far from pleasant ; but to any one lying flat on his back with the feet pointing forward, it would convey an alarming suggestion of being set on the head with the heels in the air.

Such was the fate of Waltham and Beverly as the bullocks, with a spring up the ridge, threw out a bolt and escaped from the coach. Up went the tongue into the air ; and with the added disadvantage of being on the precipitous side of the ridge, the coach tipped so that its hinder end came thump on the ground ! If Beverly and Waltham did not find themselves standing on their heads with their heels wriggling in the air, it was because they performed involuntary summersaults.

The shock was so sudden that for an instant each stared at the other in dumb amazement. Then, with some preliminary inarticulate grunts, Waltham ejaculated, "How are we to get out when the door-end stands on the ground ?





Oh, I see!" and clambering up to the front, at the risk of whirling the coach completely over with top-heaviness, he thrust his head through the front opening and looked out for the driver. His indignation was too great to find vent in the native language, so he poured it forth in English, which terrified the driver the more because he could not understand a word. It was like Dr. Johnson's wager that he would outscold the worst fishwife of Billingsgate by using only refined language. He called her an equilateral triangle, whereupon she had not another word to say.

Meanwhile the missionary was cautiously emerging from a side window. To follow this example was better, Waltham thought, than to berate the driver, and so he too crawled out. Four pairs of hands were applied to the righting of the coach, and soon they were moving again.

"Well! well! well!" cried Waltham, "I must say, my dear Beverly, that you have a dreadful propensity for upsetting bandies. First, you turn over in your own, and then you nearly do the

same in mine. Were this a ship and I its captain, you would certainly be called Jonah by my crew."

Beverly laughed. "I know," said he, "that sailors love to have at hand some prophet on whom they may lay the blame of storm or calm. But I beg to observe that I am not running away from Nineveh. I have been there, and am on my way home again, if indeed I may not be said to live in Nineveh all the time."

This led to farther talk about the journey just made by each—undertaken by the one for the temporal welfare of the natives, and by the other for their spiritual good. At length Mr. Beverly said, "My head is still dizzy, so I must try what sleep can do for it."

"I could sleep, also," said Waltham, "but for fear of what my driver may next attempt. See here, driver! I suppose you remember that at the big banian tree the road divides, and you must keep to the left or you will lose the way."

"Yes, sir; never fear. I know the way."

Accordingly, the Captain settled back among his pillows and fell asleep. How long time had passed he did not know, when he was roused by Mootooswamy's voice: "Sir! sir! I fear we have lost our way! Hush, driver, and listen to my master!"

"Have you seen the banian tree yet?"

"We have not come so far," said the driver.

"And have you driven straight forward?"

"Yes," said the driver.

"Sir," said Mootooswamy, "the road is curving even now."

"We certainly are not going due north," remarked Mr. Beverly, rousing up and feeling for his pocket-compass. "See here, Waltham, at this moment we are heading east!"

"You have both of you been sleeping," said Waltham, "and the bullocks have wandered off on some other track over the fields."

Mootooswamy confessed that he had slept three or four winks, though fully intending to help the driver watch till the banian tree was past. But the driver protested he had not closed an eye.

"If you were not sleeping," said Waltham, "how did you miss the way?"

"Because, sir, I never passed over the road before, and do not know its various marks."

"Never went over the road before? I engaged you at Kannagaram because you professed to know the road, and you assured me so again just before I fell asleep. Oh, driver, have you ever heard of England, where even the wicked people are angry if called liars? But in this country no one has any shame about it."

"Sir, of course I tell lies sometimes, but on the present occasion I am speaking the truth."

"Well, what is the truth? For you have told such a variety of different tales, which do not agree with one another, that I do not know which to believe."

"Sir, I thought no one need miss a straightforward road."

"And therefore you have been sleeping?"

Again the driver began his protestations, on which Mr. Beverly interposed, "My dear Captain, you know a Hindu's brazen assurance never

fails. We shall get no information from him. The simple fact is, we do not one of us know just where we are, and the only question is, Shall we go forward or shall we turn back?"

After a little hesitation, it was observed that the road, which for some distance had been a scarcely perceptible track, was here somewhat better worn, and that a little in advance there were faint indications of the approach to a rural village. "We will follow up the track," said the friends.





CHAPTER IV.

THE broad plain was now intersected at intervals by furrows, which served as dividing-lines between field and field. Here was a patch of castor bean, there a field of gram.* Presently the road ran beside a strip of cactus hedge, while a little forward were seen a few straggling trees, and then, in dim outline, the low, thatched houses of a native village. The driver cheered his bullocks, and presently the coach stopped beside the nearest building. There was no sight or sound of man or beast, and it seemed like a hamlet struck dead, or a village deserted in war.

“Well,” exclaimed Beverly, at length, “why do we all sit dumb?”

“I do not know,” answered Waltham, “unless

* A species of pulse.

the dead silence of the village has cast a spell over us. Hallo! taliare-e-e!* hallo-o-o!"

There was no reply.

"Shout, driver!" said Waltham, and the driver shouted. Again there was a dead silence.

"Why, the watchman at least, should be awake," said Waltham. "Really, is not this silence ominous? How if this should be one of the robber villages, and the people all out for the night thieving? Yes, perhaps the very gang that upset your bandy?"

But Mr. Beverly laughed. "That is highly improbable. This is more likely some quiet community far from the highway, seldom seeing strangers, and feeling secure from harm."

Meanwhile Mootoswamy had descended from his seat, and was running through the village, shouting loudly for the watchman or the headman. Presently, in answer to all his clamor, there was heard a drowsy response, and then a little hubbub of voices, till finally two or three of the villagers came running toward the coach.

* Watchman.

Others followed, until a dozen or more were gathered about, each man bareheaded, wrapping his dusky figure in the coarse, white muslin in which he had been sleeping. The two Englishmen got down from the coach and stood beside the observant native group. One of the villagers advanced and made a courteous salaam.

"Sir," said Waltham, returning the salutation, "are you the headman of this village?"

"I am, sir."

"We are traveling, and seem to have lost our way. What village is this?"

"Anthoor, sir."

"Ah! we were on our way from Kannagaram to Chinnacotta, and while the driver slept the bullocks wandered here."

"Sir," said the driver, "I entreat you to believe me when I say that I did not sleep."

"Then," said the headman of Anthoor, "you missed the road by turning to the right of the large banian tree close by the highway."

"Yes," said the driver, boldly. ("Ah!" said Waltham aside; "he declared we had not passed

it!") Meantime the headman continued: "You should have kept the straighter road on the left hand. The road hither turns off more abruptly on the right." ("And he was driving straight ahead!" laughed Waltham; adding aloud:) "Well, we now wish to be set right. Must we turn and go back, or can you direct us forward into the highway?"

"Sir, you shall have guides. The road by which you came, leading past our dry-cultivation, is tolerably good; but on the other side you must pass our wet-cultivation, and you will require help in picking a road past our rice-fields, lest you upset and get bemired.

"Are your tanks nicely filled?" asked Waltham.

"We shall do very well this season. But last year the rains were light, and our tanks were not half full. We could not flood the rice-fields properly for the second crop, and had hard work to pay our rent. Are you the collector, sir?"

"Oh no," said Waltham, adding some further questions about the supply of water, and explain-

ing the business which had brought him on this journey. Then the headman, turning to Mr. Beverly, asked, "Perhaps this gentleman may be the collector?" * as naïvely as if such an official had ever visited the village in person.

"No," said the missionary, "I am not the collector, nor am I employed by the government in any way. I will tell you why I came from England to this country."

"Oh," said Waltham, quietly, "so you will turn the steps of my bandy into a pulpit? Take care, or the government will have me up for such a dreadful infraction of the neutrality policy."

"I cannot help that," said the other, smiling. "You brought me of your own accord, knowing perfectly my propensity for preaching on the least provocation, and now you must take the consequences."

By this time, having opened a package of tracts in the vernacular tongue, he began: "I

* The collector of revenue of an Indian district is the chief civil officer of a half million or million people, and a mighty king to the poor Hindu villagers.

shall distribute these little books among those who can read. But first I wish to tell you something about God."

"Ah," remarked the headman, "we are very religious here. We duly place our offerings before our god—you see his shrine yonder. We keep all the feast-days, and adhere sacredly to the customs of our ancestors."

"I have no doubt," said Mr. Beverly, "that you are very exact in all these observances; but I am come to bring you the true religion, the only true one."

"Oh no, sir! Yours is the true religion for you, and ours is the true one for us. We cannot be so impious and profane as to depart from the customs of our ancestors."

"And are you quite sure you have adhered to the faith of the ancients?"

"Undoubtedly, sir! We are not such profane wretches as to depart therefrom!"

The missionary's eye wandered over the quiet moonlit scene, as if in search of some lily of the field or fowl of the air to serve for text. Sud-

denly his thought rested on the banian tree his eye had failed to see.

“That great banian you spoke of,” said he—
“how long has it stood?”

“Sir, who can tell? It has stood for ages.”

“And is it the very tree that stood there in the days of your ancestors?”

“Undoubtedly, sir!”

“Yet how did it begin? Ages since, a tiny banian seed sprouted, and there grew up the stem of a tree. After long years, that parent tree threw down from all its branches little tendrils, which bent down to the earth and took root, each becoming in its turn a new trunk, giving forth branches of its own, able in due time to throw down fresh tendrils, that gradually reached the ground and took root for themselves, until in our day we see a forest of trees, each having its own roots and branches, yet all being joined more or less remotely to the parent trunk, and all being parts of one great tree. Thus you see, that from its beginning to the present time, there have been many changes in that tree; yet

no less truly is it the same tree as in the beginning—the same, yet different.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Now it is just so with your religion. Long ago, when the Vedas were written, the Brahmins seem to have known and taught that there was only one God. But as ignorant people would have many gods, the Brahmins gradually yielded some points to the superstitious masses, and so the Puranas were written, sanctioning the worship of divinities innumerable. The Brahmins were willing that ignorant people should keep their follies, and that all this nonsense should be comprehended in one religion, provided *they themselves* could keep uppermost. So, after winking at many gods and image-worship to please the people, they made the rules of caste more and more strict to please themselves. There is reason to suppose that in the ancient times a Brahmin might marry into a lower caste—(‘Ab-ba!’ cried the audience). Yes, truly, it was even so in the very ancient days. But the Brahmins drew the lines closer and closer, so as to raise

themselves higher and put other castes lower. So I might go on and show that Brahminism is like the banian tree; it has sent down shoot after shoot for the stems of new trees, that it may gain firmer and firmer hold of the soil and overshadow the land. Caste-exclusiveness is one stem of the original trunk; idolatry another. Thus Brahminism, though in a sense the same religion as of old, is yet very different."

Such, in brief, was the sermon which had for its text a banian tree. The application was this:

"You shrank from listening to my new doctrine because it would be impious to depart from the religion taught you by your fathers. I have showed you that *they* varied from the faith of *theirs*. Suppose you should now go back to the fountain-head of your religion, and listen to the purer teachings of the Vedas? That would be advancing in the right direction. Still, your Vedas contain, after all, many errors, mingled with some truth. Therefore I come to bring you the pure and simple truth, which God began to

reveal to the ancients much earlier than the Vedas were written."

Here Mr. Beverly set forth in simplest terms the ruin and restoration of man, after which he distributed tracts and Scripture portions. Then, parting salutations being courteously exchanged, the travelers set forth, escorted by the headman himself and several of the villagers.

Among the audience, a young lad had been noticed standing behind his father and peering around at the first white faces he had ever seen. In giving out tracts and gospels, Mr. Beverly had asked, "And what is your name, little brother?" To which the boy had answered, "My name is Perumal, sir."





CHAPTER V.

AMONG all the listeners to the midnight sermon of Mr. Beverly, no one was so deeply impressed as Rungiah, father of the boy Perumal. He took little part next day in the discussions upon the new theme, but he looked thoughtful, and now and then might be seen intently reading the book which had fallen to his lot in the general distribution. At length he one morning announced his intention of going immediately to Chinnacotta on certain matters of business. He, however, said nothing about his further intention of going on toward Illathapet in search of the missionary, and would have preferred making the journey alone, but his little boy begged so earnestly to be taken that he finally ordered him to make ready at once.

Perumal's first act of preparation was a visit to the village barber. He had not, indeed, attained the dignity of a beard; still, the barber's aid was as needful to him as to Rungiah. Perumal could not remember the time when his hair was suffered to grow. The whole scalp was kept close shaven except a few hairs near the crown of his head, denoting his caste: these hairs were allowed to grow a few inches, and were called the *kur-dumi*.

On this eventful morning, when Perumal sat down cross-legged upon the ground under the barber's shed, his head was slightly shaded with a few days' growth of black hair. This was now scraped off by the barber, till Perumal's whole head was as smooth as his little brown face, and then the little bald pate was rubbed with coconut oil till it shone like polished walnut. The few black hairs of the *kur-dumi* were carefully combed and straightened so that they hung from the crown of the head half-way to the neck.

Perumal's next duty was to bathe in the village tank, after which he hastened to the washer-

man's house. This public functionary delivered up the clean clothes belonging to Rungiah's family, and the boy, hastening home, began his toilet. He first took a piece of white muslin, several yards in length, and wound it about his middle, letting fall from each side a deep festoon, which he arranged so that it fell below the knees, and answered every purpose of loose, flowing trowsers. Next, he took a similar strip of muslin, eight or ten yards long, and with his father's aid twisted it securely round and round his head till it became a turban, whose many graceful folds were a safe defence against the rays of the sun. A third piece of muslin Perumal threw over his bare shoulders, so that it enveloped his waist and arms; and then he stepped forth to display himself—a little cloud of pure white muslin—to his mother's fond eyes. He was a small copy of his father, both in features and dress. The very rings in his ears and on his little bare toes were counterparts of those worn by Rungiah. Following the example of his father, Perumal now thrust his feet into san-

dals and went through the outer door. This was his first appearance in a turban. Hitherto he had run bareheaded, or at most had worn a skull-cap, like other Hindu school-boys. Now his turban made him feel one year older and some inches taller. In the street they met his uncle. "What! the little brother is a man already! we shall soon be marrying him off!" cried Ramasamy. Perumal, laughing, followed his father out of the village on the road to Chinnacotta, where they hoped to arrive at sunset.

Chinnacotta was a native town, where one might see the ruins of an old mud fort, several streets of native dwellings, and one house built for English use. This house was occupied by Mr. Beaumont, who, as sub-collector of the district, was assigned to Chinnacotta; while Mr. Morton, the collector, lived at Illathapet. Mr. Beaumont was a tall, portly gentleman, who had assiduously cultivated the suave, dignified, benign style of politeness which he had observed among Hindu gentleman, rather than the frank and hearty manners of his native England. He

would have played a graceful part in the days when the highest officials of the East India Company, both civil and military, were expected to figure in heathen processions and to go in state to offer costly gifts at Hindu shrines. He wondered that any Englishman should have shown reluctance in the performance of such friendly courtesies toward the Hindus, and he reflected with amazement on what he deemed the insane fanaticism of Sir Peregrine Maitland and others, who had resigned posts of honor and profit rather than take part in the religious ceremonies of idolaters. To Mr. Beaumont it was matter of deep regret that his lot had not been cast in those palmy days, when he might have enjoyed such distinguished opportunities of displaying his complaisance and his enlightened religious toleration before crowds of admiring heathens. For now, as he mournfully reflected, all these things were changed, and the glory of the East India Company was dimmed by cowardly concessions to the bigotry of a few fanatics in Parliament and elsewhere.

Mr. Beaumont sat this evening under the shade of the cocoanut and mango trees bordering a little tank in his garden. He had a visitor with him from Kanagaram—a man of quite another stamp. Captain Lee was a noisy, boisterous man. In his youth he had lost a mother whose teachings he could not quite forget. Sent out to India a mere boy, his natural gayety had led him to seek fun and mischief wherever they could be found, and thus, without seeming at first to have any peculiar propensity for evil, he had gradually acquired vicious habits. To hush his conscience he swore loudly and drank deeply. Altogether, he was not precisely a congenial associate for the bland and quiet Mr. Beaumont, though the latter based his objections to Lee's society on his manners, not on his morals. Of this Lee had become aware, and this was the topic of conversation between these worthies as they sat beside the tank under the shade of the trees.

“Pshaw, Beaumont!” Lee exclaimed, reaching for brandy from the tea-poy at his side, “what’s

the use of being wicked at all, unless you're *jolly* wicked?"

"My dear Lee," replied the civilian, "have I hinted in the most distant manner that I thought you wicked? I only represented that a degree less of hilarity in your manner might enhance your personal dignity in the eyes of the mild and tranquil Hindus. With this exception, my dear Lee, I protest that I consider your habits irreproachable."

"*Irreproachable!*" said Lee, with a sneer of ineffable contempt. "*Pah!* You know I'm wicked, Beaumont, and I know it. But I am candid, at least. I never am hypocrite enough to defend my own immorality. But you, Beaumont, are much like me, only in a quieter way."

Mr. Beaumont's visage was faintly tinged, as he replied, "I hardly know, Captain, how to understand your remark."

"Pah!" rejoined the courteous Lee, "I suppose you do not know what honors have been paid to your memory at the temple of Yengoor,

since your departure from that region left the natives inconsolable."

"No!" said Beaumont.

"They have carved your image and set it against their temple walls."

"It will pass unmarked among the crowd of gods."

"Oh no! Lest you should fail of getting due honor, they have carved your name under the image, together with thanks for your goodness in patronizing the temple dances.

"Very well," said Mr. Beaumont, spreading himself for a little speech, "I shall certainly never regret anything I may have done with a view of gaining the good-will of the natives toward the honorable East India Company and its servants. Do not think I will disavow in your presence, my dear Lee, a course on which I look back with great satisfaction, on account of the laudable motives which prompted it. If I seldom allude to such matters, it is because we have fallen on degenerate days, when these things are not viewed as they formerly were. Some

people in our day have the folly to assert that there should be one and the same standard of morality for England and for India. They quite forget the sensible motto, 'With the Romans do as the Romans do'—a motto which you and I, my dear Lee, are capable of understanding and practicing."

"I don't understand it so at all," cried Lee. "Whatever my life is, I know in my heart that right is right, and wrong is wrong, all the world over. You are a mere sham, Beaumont, while I, bad as I am, can at least call myself honest." With this salve to his sore conscience, Lee tossed off another glass of brandy. He was hardly "jolly" in this day's wickedness. By what seemed the merest chance, he had been reminded that it was the anniversary of his blessed mother's death. His conscience was disturbed, and he was trying to silence its voice by boasting of what he called his "honesty," and at the same time to deaden his ear to that voice by deep potations.

Meantime, the bland Mr. Beaumont was con-

sidering how far his honor required him to resent the epithet "sham." But he said to himself, "After all, Lee is already too drunk to remember to-morrow every word he utters to-day; and no one else is listening. Yet what an excitement he throws one into! I can scarcely preserve my calmness and dignity. It will really corrupt my good manners to associate with such an ill-bred fellow. He is almost enough to enrage a Sanyasi. I will get him dead drunk and have him carried to bed. Have a little more brandy, Captain?"

At this moment Rungiah and Perumal appeared at the gate. After a moment's hesitation, they drew near and made their respectful salutations, which were very courteously returned by Mr. Beaumont.

"Hillo!" roared Lee; "what'll ye bet, Beaumont, that this urchin can swim if I pitch him into the tank?" and he darted at Perumal. Mr. Beaumont was dreadfully scandalized at witnessing such a scene on his own premises. Away fled the boy, and after him staggered Lee shout-

ing, swearing and laughing, till, hitting his foot on a cocoanut, he narrowly escaped rolling down the stone steps into the water, while Perumal, having made the circuit of the tank, came trembling to his father's side. Rungiah looked on in blank amazement. Mr. Beaumont was now so indignant that he would have thanked anybody to thrash Lee. This worthy, having recovered his legs, came back laughing violently, and taking no farther notice of Perumal, settled down again into his chair, merely exclaiming, "Oh, how jolly!" Mr. Beaumont had therefore nothing more to do than to smooth over matters with the insulted natives; for he was affable toward the merest child, nor would he have treated even a pariah with any positive unkindness. He therefore made every apology, representing Lee as a partially crazy man, in spite of that worthy's muttered protest of 'What a jolly lie!' Having finished his apologies, Beaumont added, "And now, can I do anything for you?"

"Sir," said Rungiah, "I am in search of a white gentleman who distributes little books

explaining the Christian religion. Can you tell me whether I shall find him by going on to Illathapet?"

Again Mr. Beaumont's face betrayed as near an approach to emotion as his well-trained features were allowed to manifest. But Lee screamed out, "He means Beverly!" adding a variety of oaths. A moment before he had been in very bad odor with his companion, but now Pilate and Herod were made friends. Beaumont regarded all missionaries as impertinent meddlers—as open violators of the "neutrality policy" adopted by the Honorable Company in matters of religion—as men who wrought only mischief in India, and who should have stayed at home minding their proper business. He therefore began once more to think Lee a very well-meaning sort of fellow.

There had been no perceptible pause before Beaumont replied, "Yes, the gentleman you ask for lives at Illathapet. Why do you wish to see him?"

"I desire," said Rungiah, "to make of him

some further inquiries about the Christian religion."

"Here, butler!" yelled Lee, now fairly roused by drink to the point of defying his conscience. The butler, a Mohammedan, appeared and received a whispered order from Lee, who then, turning once more to Rungiah, continued noisily: "No need of going farther; I can tell you all you wish to know. This gentleman is a Christian, and so am I," adding in English: "Of course you're a Christian, Beaumont?"

"My dear friend," cried Beaumont, "pray, do you take me for a Jew, a Pagan or a Turk?"

Lee made no reply, as the butler now returned with a slice of roast beef, half-cooked and very bloody. "Now here," said Lee, "is some of the food we Christians eat, and there," pointing to the brandy bottle, "is what we drink. If you will sit down and eat with us, you will discover the chief distinction between our religion and yours."

Rungiah shrank from the drunken wretch in

horror. All his life he had regarded the cow as sacred. That any one should have the impiety to kill such a creature was sufficiently startling, but to eat of the flesh! He would almost as soon have eaten a tender little baby. And intoxicating liquor too!

But now the courteous Mr. Beaumont, unwilling that his personal popularity among the natives should be diminished by the scenes just enacted on his premises, began to make certain explanations. He begged that Rungiah would not attach too much importance to the gentleman's excited demeanor. The gentleman was hardly himself to-day. In fact (and here another happy fiction occurred to Beaumont's mind), it was a sort of religious festival with the gentleman! Rungiah must look upon the Captain's vagaries with the indulgence he would extend to the mad capers of Hindoo boys during the feast of Pongal, or the wild frenzy of Mohammedans during the Mohurram!

These apologies Rungiah received with cool civility. After casting one more glance of ineffa-

ble disgust at the drunken Lee, he exchanged a dignified salaam with Mr. Beaumont, and passed out of the gate, followed by Perumal. The two worthies within observed that, so far from turning towards Illathapet, he walked steadily away in the opposite direction.





CHAPTER VI.

WHEN Rungiah and Perumal were out of sight, Mr. Beaumont looked at Captain Lee and almost laughed aloud. It was such an excellent deed to scare a Hindoo away from a missionary that he felt inclined to forgive the Captain's "unnecessary roughness of demeanor." But the miserable Lee, having within another half hour faithfully carried out the private programme of his hospitable entertainer by getting as drunk as possible, reeled off to bed.

Being left alone, Mr. Beaumont called a servant to carry his smoking-chair upon the verandah. Here he lighted a fresh cheroot, and leaned back comfortably to enjoy his meditations. They were on this wise:

Lee was certainly a disgusting ally. But then

he *was* an ally, if properly managed, and if not managed, might possibly become an inconvenient opponent. What had come over him lately, that he showed so many indications of suddenly and entirely veering about? Had the fanatics been meddling with him? If they could gain Lee, they would gain an ally who did nothing by halves. No, he must be wheedled and kept in a state of all possible satisfaction with himself. This would be work for the breakfast-table next day.

Then Beaumont mused on the sad pass matters had reached in the district of Illathapet. Nobody but himself tried to keep the missionaries within bounds, and they were really getting to have everything their own way. Look at the civilians of the district. There was Morton—now Beaumont's immediate superior—nobody could accuse him of caring much about missions, but neither, on the other hand, did he do anything to keep them in proper place. There was Mr. Stanley, a perfect gentleman, an excellent Oriental scholar, an upright judge—pity he so

far lacked common discretion as even to favor these missionaries—yes, positively to favor them! But Stanley would be promoted soon, and leave the district, and then perhaps the next Zillah judge would be of Beaumont's own way of thinking. "And when Stanley is promoted, there will be a step all around, and *I* shall be collector in Morton's place, and *then* we will see!"

Next morning Beaumont rose at his usual hour, drank coffee, took his morning gallop, attended to various personal matters, and finally came out at nine to breakfast, smiling, self-satisfied, serene. Far other was the aspect of the miserable sinner who sat at the opposite end of the table. Lee had slept heavily till a late hour, when his servant had cautiously ventured into the darkened bedroom, because the breakfast-table was spread and the host was a mirror of punctuality. Then from the inner room had issued irate grunts, and sounds like flinging pillows and slippers after dodging natives, and next, popping of corks from soda-water bottles, with

an odor of brandy; and finally, there had emerged from the bedroom the figure of Lee, washed and combed, of course, and clad in fresh, clean linen, but looking, after all, like the miserable dog he was. His servant had given anxious advice to Mr. Beaumont's cook regarding the best means of scourging into action a much-abused stomach; and the result was, a little clear, sharp pepper-water, and a dainty bit of deviled chicken hot as mustard and cayenne could make it. The first was called a slop by the disgusted captain, and the last was pronounced flat and tasteless, until it had received a second coat of cayenne, and then Lee called it a beastly mess, and ordered his boy to fling it into the cook's face. Meanwhile, Mr. Beaumont, feeling very virtuous and happy, sipped his fragrant tea, trifled with his egg and ate contentedly his buttered muffin, until an opportunity occurred for opening conversation by the remark :

"That was a happy thought of yours last night, Lee! The trick of the beef, I mean."

"Not original," growled Lee. "Lots of fellows

I know up in Bengal have played it off on the natives."

"Ah yes! I may have heard of it before," said Beaumont; "but if not original with you, it was none the less efficacious last night."

Lee ought to have seemed flattered, Beaumont thought. But he seemed rather to wince. At length, by way of rejoinder, he said,

"The fellow was a Brahmin, I take it?"

"A Brahmin? oh *no*, my dear Lee! But you did not observe closely."

"Well, he was not a pariah, any way, or he might have gobbled our viands. He was a caste-man, and that's enough for me."

Said Beaumont: "Yes, he was a man of good caste, and we did him the service of showing how utterly contrary to all his habits and prejudices would be the new religion he is so curious about."

Again Lee winced, and this time he began to scowl. The miserable hollowness of this Beaumont's life now roused within Lee a detestation he had often felt before. Had he been in liquor,

he would once more have called Beaumont a sham; but being now sober, though cross and miserable after his debauch, he would not insult the man at whose table he sat. Therefore, curbing his indignation, he only burst forth, "I wish I knew where to find the fellow! Do you know where he went?"

"No," said Beaumont. "Why, pray? Depend upon me, my dear fellow, I took all possible pains that no personal odium should attach to you in consequence of your somewhat blunt but very useful efforts towards enlightening the native mind as to some little peculiarities that prevail among Christian nations."

"Personal odium? What do I care for that?" cried Lee. "Why, if I could see the fellow, I would tell him I'm a vile wretch, a disgrace to the name of Englishman, and with no claim at all to that of Christian."

Mr. Beaumont studied Lee's features and expression for some minutes, though pretending to be absorbed in eating the creamy pulp of a custard-apple. "Try one of these, Captain," said

he ; " they are fresh from my own garden. You will find them perfectly ripe and deliciously cool."

"Thanks; but I've no appetite for fruit or anything else."

A pause. Mr. Beaumont took leisure to arrange his ideas for an impressive little speech. But before delivering himself thereof, he observed, dryly,

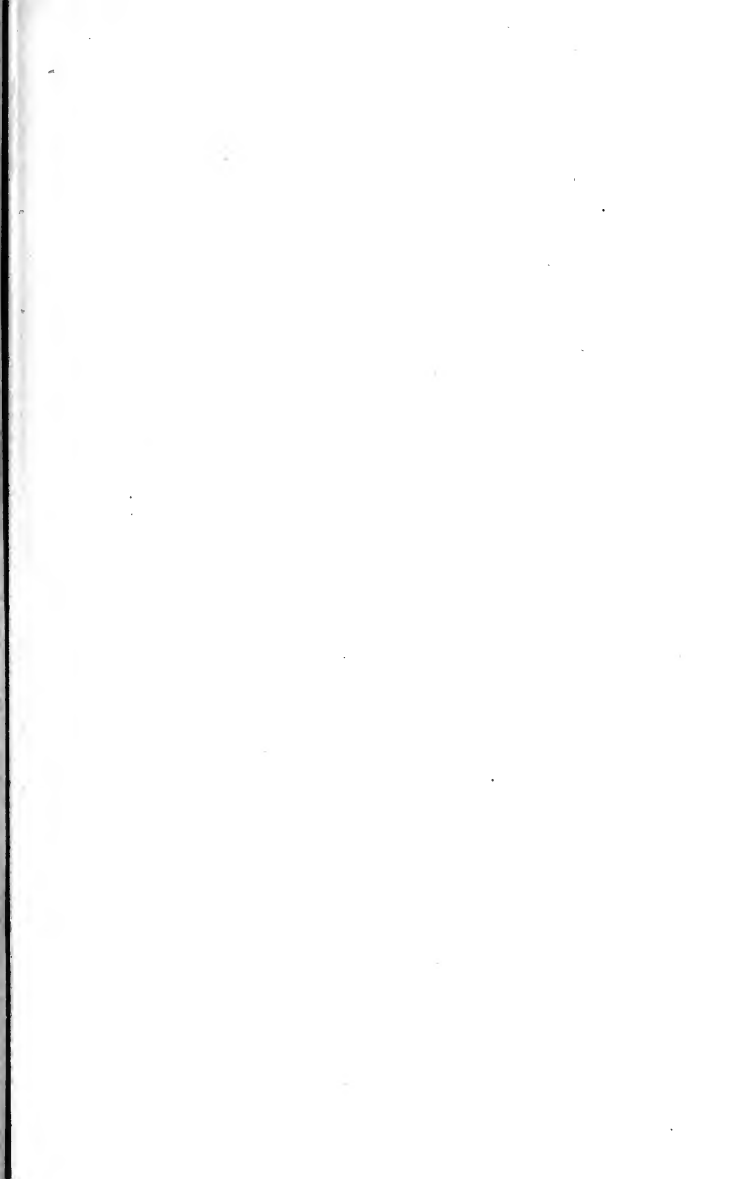
"Your penitence and self-abasement are vastly edifying, my dear Lee. I conclude therefrom that you have lately been in conference with Mr. Beverly."

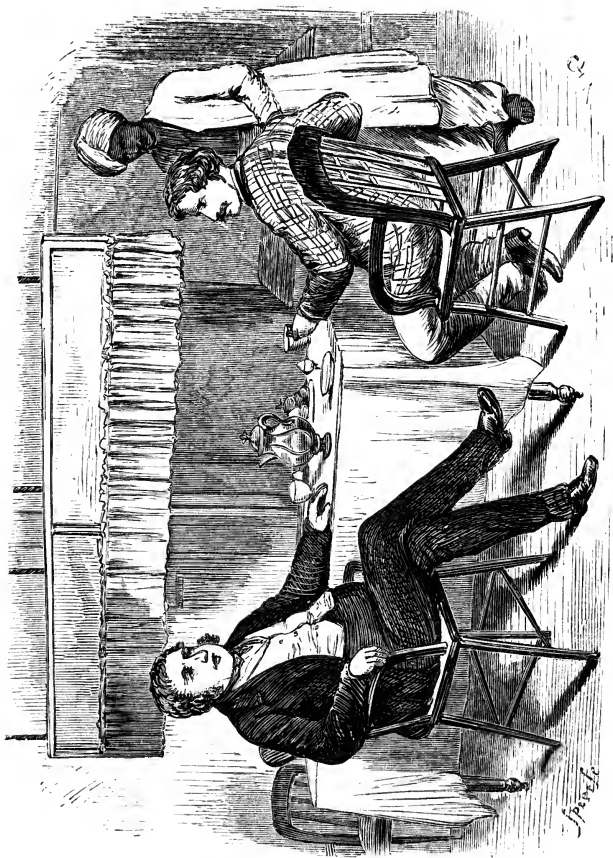
"No, I have not," said Lee, shortly. Then, by way of smoothing over his own roughness, he added, "Mr. Beverly called on me the other day, but I told my boy to say master was out."

"Very good," said Mr. Beaumont. "Very proper, indeed. Not that I should myself object to receiving a call from Mr. Beverly, but you, my dear Captain, are so excitable that you are wise to avoid meeting such a—in short, meeting Mr. Beverly. Understand me, Captain, that I

have nothing against Mr. Beverly as a gentleman or as a clergyman, but I must discountenance him as a missionary to the Hindus. Understand again," said Beaumont, gracefully waving his hands as he pursued his little speech, "I am a loyal son of the Church of England. Had I been born a Hindu, of course I should have adhered to the Brahminical faith, and should have been just as well off. My being a Christian is owing simply to the fact that Christianity happens to be the state religion of my native country. Being English, it follows that I am also Christian; and as I said before, I am a loyal son of the Church of England. But let her remember that she is the Church of *England*, and not of *Hindustan*, and let her keep her priests at home, minding their own parish affairs, instead of permitting them to wander to India, meddling with the innocent prejudices and harmless customs of the Hindus, disturbing their minds, and bringing controversies into quiet households.

"I suppose," said Lee, "if the Church of England claims to be the Church of Christ, she must





Beaumont and Lee at Breakfast.

Captain Wallham.

of course send missionaries all over the world to preach the gospel."

Beaumont actually stared with surprise for a moment; but recovering himself, rejoined, "How well you are posted on the fanatical side, my dear Lee! You hardly need any help from Mr. Beverly himself. But let me tell you wherein your argument is fallacious. It assumes that the Hindus have no good religion of their own. Just conceive, my dear Lee, the self-assurance and impudence needed by the man who would attack this beautiful Brahminical faith! Only imagine the—"

Lee broke in: "One would fancy that you design to leave the civil service, settle at home, and run for Parliament, so as to make a glowing speech on the beauties of the Brahminic faith, the next time the Company's charter is to be renewed."

Again Beaumont almost stared, but recovering by an effort of memory the thread of his discourse, he continued:

"Just fancy, my dear Lee, the impudence and

self-assurance of my saying to a Hindu's face that my religion is better than his !”

“It *would* be impudence and self-assurance for you to call your religion better than a Hindu's, I cheerfully admit,” said Lee. Mr. Beaumont was discomfited, but the choice of expressions being his own, he could not resent them. Lee continued : “But it would be quite another thing, and perfectly true, to say that Mr. Beverly's religion is better than a Hindu's, or that Mr. Stanley's is better, or Captain Waltham's.”

“A-a-ah !” said Beaumont, with a look of intelligence, “I have it then, at last ! I remember they said Waltham passed through the other day while I was from home. And so he called at Kannagaram, and laid down the law for you ?”

“Yes, Captain Waltham called on me. He came straight to my quarters in his traveling bandy, and asked for some breakfast. I should have been shy of him, as of Beverly ; but he rushed in and took me without ceremony, in his own hearty, jolly, cheerful way. In fact, his demeanor toward a miserable, friendless dog like

myself was enough to win my heart. I asked him to stay with me, but he said his tents were being pitched a little way off, and that I must dine with him that evening. So I went, and he gave me a grand dinner, but no brandy—said he only brought a little flask in case of sudden illness. Then I offered to send him some, but he refused—said he never took it unless ill, and did not mean ever to offer it to me. I comforted myself by resolving to get drunk when I went home to bed; but before I knew it, Waltham made me ask him to breakfast next day; so of course I kept sober to be fit for entertaining him. Next morning at my table Waltham made me agree to dine with him every night, and said he would breakfast with me each morning. It was only four days. When he left me, I made up for lost time—he had tried to make me promise that I would not. Then I got over that, and was lonely for a while; so I concluded to come and see you. I wanted some of your good brandy; I knew you would offer it to me—you always do, though you know you ought to refuse it.”

“I really could not be guilty of such a want of hospitality,” coldly returned Beaumont.

Lee, after a little silence, resumed: “Look at Waltham—a good ten years my junior in the service, a rising man, making his mark in India; and then look at me, an invalided Captain, stationed as paymaster of pensions to superannuated sepoys in the dismantled fort at Kanagaram. Waltham had his good angel—a lovely Christian wife. She is dead, but her work lives. I have had a bad angel ever since I came to this district, and, Beaumont, you know who he is.”





CHAPTER VII.

MR. BEVERLY was unwilling to lose sight of the people to whom he had preached by moonlight. Accordingly, being himself necessarily absorbed for a few weeks in the affairs of his own immediate station, he despatched his native catechist with a message to the villagers.

It was evening when this man reached Anthoor. Gathering a little audience of the older inhabitants, he inquired whether they would like to have him open a school in which their children should be taught from printed books. Now, in ordinary Hindu schools many of the lessons are simply written with an iron style upon strips of dried palm leaf, so that clear black lettering on smooth white paper is a highly valued acquisition. The catechist

said that Mr. Beverly offered to provide a teacher six days of the week, free of expense to the villagers, if they would on their part attend preaching in the school-room on the Sabbath and observe the day by resting from work. The hope of Christianizing the village was freely avowed.

"If we become Christians," said Rungiah, with a stern face, "must we eat beef?"

"Not unless you choose," said the catechist. "I myself am a Christian, but as I am not fond of beef, I never eat it."

"But *might* you eat it if you chose?"

"Yes."

"Oh," said some of the villagers, "then you Christians are like Mohammedans? And how can you expect us to embrace a religion which sanctions the slaying of the cow?"

"Our religion is very unlike the Mohammedan," said the catechist, "yet it does expressly authorize the use of animal food." And he gave an outline of Scripture teachings on this point, adding such other information as his audience

seemed to require. After much discussion, the catechist withdrew to pass the night under the shade of a tree. Nor was it deemed inhospitable for the villagers to refrain from asking him into their own dwellings. The social customs of Christian nations are hardly dreamed of in a country where caste builds up high walls between man and man. Besides, the season of the year had now arrived when the natives generally prefer to spread their mats on the ground before their own doors, and sleep in the open air.

In the middle of the night, Rungiah rose from his mat and stole softly out of the village to the tree under which the catechist lay. In the brilliant tropical moonlight the sleeper's features were perfectly distinct. They gave the idea of a character guileless and benign, and their expression was that of perfect peace. Rungiah gazed at the sleeper for some minutes, sighing heavily as he remembered all that had weighed on his mind for the past few weeks. "This stranger does not look like a bad man or a deceiver," said

he, and bending down, he aroused the catechist, who opened his eyes and sat up.

"I have come," said Rungiah, "to talk with you in private."

"I remember your face," said the stranger. "What made you ask about eating beef?"

Rungiah narrated the occurrences at Chinna-cotta which had so outraged his feelings.

"Ah," said the stranger, "no wonder you turned from a religion set forth in such style. But do not think all white men are Christians."

"These men called themselves so."

"Yes, in a certain sense, as having come from a country where Christianity prevails. But this blessed religion does not belong to any one country or people. It goes all over the world, and wherever a man lives according to its precepts, there you find a Christian. Unless it rule your heart and life, you are no Christian, though all your neighbors are."

"Then those men were deceivers?"

"Yes. Suppose I am born in a city where some Brahmins live, and choose to call myself a

Brahmin, does my assertion make me one? No, and I deceive only those unacquainted with the bearing and marks of a Brahmin. I cannot be one unless I were born such. So a man, whether white or black, to be a Christian, must have passed through the New Birth."

"Yes," said Rungiah, "I read about being born again in the book your preacher gave me. And I said to myself, 'this book is good, though those men were bad.'"

"Yes, the book is good, and unless their lives agree with it they are not Christians."

There was a pause, till Rungiah said, "Although you do not eat animal food, yet by joining those who may eat it if they will, it seems to me you offend against the rules of your caste."

"Ah, friend," said the catechist, "in becoming a Christian I lost caste and was deserted by all my friends. When I received baptism, my wife looked on, beating her breast, tearing her hair and rending the air with her shrieks. Directly after, she took our children and fled to

her father's house, where her friends took her in with bitter curses on my name. Every year I pay her a visit, and entreat her with tears to forsake me no longer, but she says it is I who have forsaken her. My pretty children, too—she teaches them to abhor me. I asked the English magistrate to support my authority as a father, and he decided that the children should be controlled by me; but my wife has hidden them away in some village where the police cannot find them. When I go to visit my wife, she cooks my rice and puts it outside of the house. I take it up and go away to some spot where I may sit down without giving offence, and eat by sufferance.”

“*What!*” groaned Rungiah, whose growing horror culminated at this point, “would my wife forsake me thus?” He thought of Veeramma as she had looked that evening—so pretty and docile—her glossy black hair wreathed with fragrant white flowers, her graceful figure wrapped in a cloth whose scarlet hue set off so well her dark complexion. He remembered with

what care she ladled out upon the broad green plantain leaf a pile of snowy rice, crowning it with the rich and savory curry, and then how her timid glance had seemed to question whether his taste approved her culinary skill. Would Veeramma one day put his mess outside the door as she would throw morsels to a dog? Would she hide from him his first-born Perumal, his infant Muttu? "Oh, how *could* you bear to lose caste?" asked he.

"I could bear it," said the catechist, "from love to One who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. Have you not learned of him in your little book?"

The conversation continued. "Perhaps," said the catechist, at length, "such trials may not fall to your lot. If all the villagers should become Christians in a body—that is, if they should renounce heathenism and ask for Christian instruction—these sore partings between friend and friend might be avoided. But if not, remember Him who said, 'He that loveth father or mother

more than me, is not worthy of me.' Could you not bear all for him?"

"I would try," said Rungiah; and so they parted.

Next day, the subject of the school being resumed, it appeared that some of the villagers were fearful of innovations not in accordance with the rules of caste. Their utmost concession was that the subject should be held under consideration for a fortnight, at the end of which time Mr. Beverly himself might be expected, the catechist said, to visit Anthoor in person. With this understanding, the native visitor departed.

After the lapse of a fortnight, Mr. Beverly accordingly set off for Anthoor. Not far from the end of his journey he suddenly heard the wailing tones of the burial horns, and presently saw a funeral procession. The place of corpses was separated from the village by a broad stretch of untilled land. Mr. Beverly halted to observe the mournful train. The bier was constructed with a head-piece, against which the corpse was placed in a half-sitting posture. It was clad for

the last time in its richest garments, even to the ample turban. Its eyes were open, and between its half-parted lips had been inserted the accustomed betel leaf and areca nut. The chief mourner was a little boy, and the procession comprised the usual number of hired mourning-women, whose shrieks and wails rose shrill and high above the despairingly monotonous drone, drone, drone of the death-horns.

If some poor idiot were to sit uttering hour by hour, without a single vocal cadence, the one syllable, "Gone! gone! gone! gone! gone! gone!" the listener would stand appalled. Like the inquisitorial punishment of drop after drop of water upon the offender's head, the absolute certainty of a perpetual, unvarying repetition would be extremest torture. Of all dreadful things in India, perhaps the death-horn is worst, sounding, as it does, in the Christian's ear, "Lost! lost! lost! lost!"

So Mr. Beverly had often thought, and so it seemed to him now, fearing, as he did, that the unknown deceased might not have reaped ad-

vantage from the story of salvation twice repeated in the village of Anthoor.

For some time the funeral ceremonies delayed the gathering of an audience, but when, at length, Mr. Beverly gained a hearing, he saw no welcome in the faces of his hearers. His allusion to the proposed school drew forth no response, until at length one man spoke thus :

“Sir, from the night when you first came to this village, my brother Rungiah began to neglect his wonted offerings to our god. He carried no more flowers to hang about its neck, he broke no more young cocoanuts at its feet, he poured no more clarified butter on its lips. And from the day when your messenger came, he constantly begged us to forsake the faith of our ancestors and go after your new religion. At last the gods, in anger, smote my brother for such impiety. But even when he was dying, having refused to send for our guru (*religious guide*), he called incessantly on your god Jesus, and said he was going to him. He also begged that his family might be sent to you to be

trained as Christians. But we, who are wise, take warning by his example, and resolve to repel all profane innovations, lest we, too, perish with the same destruction."

To reason with superstition like this was at present wasted breath, and Mr. Beverly was obliged to leave without having as yet attained the object of his journey. "But at least one soul is safe," he thought, with a thrill of joy; "and I will seek again for others also."





CHAPTER VIII.

THE weeks rolled on. Repeated visits to Anthoor seemed utterly fruitless, except in making Mr. Beverly acquainted, by slow degrees, through the sullen remarks of the villagers, with the extent of the mischief set on foot by the insults offered to Rungiah and Perumal at Chinnacotta. He now resolved on expostulating with the makers of at least one stumbling-block in the footpath of the heathen. He learned one day that Mr. Beaumont was on a tour through his part of the collectorate, and might most likely be found at Kannagaram. Now this was the place of Captain Lee's abode. But Beaumont was not staying at Lee's quarters in the fort. He had pitched his tents in a mango grove beyond the village, and thither poor Lee was daily drawn by his longing for

some of Beaumont's good brandy and for the sight of a white face. These two associates had not parted in Chinnacotta on the best terms; yet Mr. Beaumont had resolved to endure such affronts as Lee might offer him when not in the presence of others, rather than let him be driven to seek the society of "fanatics." And certainly only when driven would Lee seek companions who did not ply him with liquor: so Beaumont thought.

The sub-collector's tents made almost a little village. The largest served for holding his cutcherry or court, in another he ate, a third was his bed-room, and the smallest of all his bath-tent.

As Mr. Beverly approached he was descried by Captain Lee. "There's Beverly," cried the officer, unheroically; "I leave him for you to manage, Beaumont. Don't let him know I am here;" and he beat a hasty and rather inglorious retreat into the bath-tent, that being the only one to which he could gain access without passing under Mr. Beverly's notice. As for Beau-

mont, he replied most cheerfully, "I am perfectly ready for the encounter," and sat quite still till his guest came up, when he received him with a graceful welcome.

The opening conversation between the collector and the clergyman was conducted with the politeness habitual with each. "But this man's courtesy must not serve him as a shield for warding off the truth," thought Beverly. "I must speak plainly to him now, if never again." And he proceeded to state simply the reason of his present visit. Mr. Beaumont listened with an air of calm and unruffled attention. Nor was he the only auditor. Every word was heard by Lee, who, having rushed into the bath-tent so precipitately as to stumble into the tub, now sat in dripping garments. His only relief was in observing through a slit in the tent that his horse was being saddled on the side of the grove farthest from Mr. Beverly.

The missionary having stated the rumors he had heard regarding the scene at the tank, remarked, "I fear there must have been some

foundation for these reports, but would gladly hope that they are an exaggerated account of the actual transaction." Here he paused.

Mr. Beaumont, having looked at his visitor as if to ascertain that he was ready for a reply, remarked in his blindest tones,

"So far as I now recollect the occurrence was substantially like the report you have heard of it."

"I wish then to inquire," said Mr. Beverly, "whether it was quite fair in you, as a well-informed Englishman, to let this Hindu carry away such an idea of Christianity?"

Mr. Beaumont seemed to muse for a moment, after which he remarked, "I let him carry away with him very much the same idea I have of it myself. Yes, I think that was what may be called quite fair." After but an instant's pause, he added, "At the same time, I do not particularly concern myself as to what views of the Christian religion a Hindu may happen to adopt. For instance, it is quite possible that you may present Christianity to a Hindu's mind in one

of its more alluring phases, and Captain Lee may present it in a less alluring one. Meanwhile, I am bound by my official position to remain indifferent as to whether the Hindu adopts your view or Captain Lee's."

"I do not now," said Mr. Beverly, "address you in your official capacity. Nor shall I allude to the neutrality policy of the Company. I speak to you as an individual, and I ask, are you, in truth, personally indifferent as to the view of Christianity a Hindu may happen to adopt? Do you secretly object to his adopting my view, or are you genuinely indifferent?"

Mr. Beaumont, annoyed at being driven to contradict himself or tell a direct lie, replied, "Quite indifferent. And now having answered thus frankly, may I remark without offence that Mr. Beverly's questions are rather more personal than is consistent with his usual courtesy."

"There are times," said Mr. Beverly, "when even the Christian duty of courtesy must yield to the higher Christian duty of faithfulness. But I fall back upon your earlier remark, that you

let that Hindu carry away the same idea of Christianity which you have of it yourself. Now I ask, what *is* your idea of Christianity? Do you think its spirit and teachings were illustrated in that scene on your premises? Do you really think it *was* one phase of our religion that Captain Lee set forth? Nay, I will not now speak of his behavior, since he is absent; but let me ask, with the utmost directness, do you think a Hindu could gain any accurate idea of what our religion is from witnessing *your* course of life? And do you think God will never call you to an account?"

Mr. Beaumont turned his eyes toward the missionary with the least little gaze of surprise, and then, in the tone of voice one might use in addressing an unreasonable child, he said,

"Dear! *d-e-a-r* me! To think how the habit of looking at things in a solely professional aspect can make a man narrow-minded and illiberal! There's the surgeon, now; he insists that as I am of an apoplectic habit, I should quit port and drink only claret. But I tell him I

know my own constitution perfectly, and can judge, to the measure of a drop, just what is good for me. His scientific theory is of course correct, but I tell him that while it is broadly true, yet he cannot always take into account the thousand varying physical conditions which must require slight shades of modification in his general theory to make it fit individual cases. And then we part the best of friends. Just so, my dear Mr. Beverly, I am quite aware that you came here professionally, and can therefore assure you that, however dictatorially you may speak, I shall not be angry in the least."

Mr. Beverly was on the point of uttering a still more solemn remonstrance, when poor Lee burst upon the scene. "I'm done with you now, Beaumont," said he. "Either you are a consummate actor, or else such an iceberg that nothing will thaw you but the fires of the lower world. You would be the ruin of me." And throwing himself into the saddle, he furiously struck both spurs into his horse. The fiery

animal sprang forward, cleared the grove, stumbled and flung his driver heavily to the ground.

Mr. Beverly hastened to his help, while Beaumont, still outwardly calm, cried out, "Boy, send the Lascars to bring Captain Lee to my tent!" But from this offer Lee shrank in horror, begging to be carried to his own quarters. Then Beaumont, with undiminished politeness, ordered his palanquin for carrying Lee to the fort.

"I entreat you, Mr. Beverly," cried the wretched Lee, "stay with me till I am better or dead."

When left alone, Mr. Beaumont's expression of countenance changed into something satanic. But he gave no other sign of discomposure.

Lee went through a course of delirium tremens, during which Mr. Beaumont sent a servant daily with much ceremony to inquire about his health.

After Beaumont's return to Chinnacotta, he heard one day that Mr. Beverly had just passed through, carrying the convalescent Lee to Illa-

thapet. "Ah, the fanatics have him now!" said Beaumont. Some mornings later, opening his Madrás mail at the breakfast-table, he saw, in the Fort St. George Gazette, that Captain Lee had leave of absence to visit Bangalore and the Hills.





CHAPTER IX.

IT was now May, and Captain Waltham was to superintend certain public works at a native village called Periacoil. This place was not far from Illathapet, but the Captain thought it best to take a house for a few months close by the spot where his days were to be spent. Having made all necessary arrangements, he finally took an early cup of coffee one morning, and then galloped over to Periacoil, arriving in season to breakfast with the Rylands, resident missionaries, and the only English people at the station. As they sat around the table, Waltham said, "Perhaps I should thank you for not choosing the best house in the place, since it is now awaiting my occupation."

"But why not stay with us," said his friends,

"when your society would give us such pleasure?"

"Thanks, but I have already taken the other house, and my servants will have it prepared for me by to-morrow. And to be frank, I do not like your house at all. It is a mystery to me that you chose it at a time when the other was vacant."

"But, Captain," said Mrs. Ryland, "how would it sound to say that the missionary took the best house in the place?"

"Why not?" said the Captain, "when it is the only safe house for European occupation in this hostile climate?"

"I fear we made a foolish choice," admitted Mr. Ryland. "We certainly find it hotter here than we expected."

"But what could you have expected?" said Waltham. "Look up at the bare rafters and tiles overhead. Already the sun heats those red tiles like the bricks of an oven. If you finish the season here, you may expect to pay a pretty doctor's bill, unless your doctor receipts gratis for missionaries."

"But we are to stretch a white cotton ceiling overhead," said Mrs. Ryland, "and that will keep the heat of the tiles from beating on our heads."

"Yes, in some measure," said Waltham. "But then I dislike the situation. You are too near the river: it must be damp here in the rainy season. I should say that during monsoon the water would overflow some parts of your garden."

Here Mrs. Ryland innocently replied, "Oh no; we were here last rainy season, and the water came only to the foot of our compound."

"Ah, indeed! that is quite near enough," said Waltham. "And then you are so choked in with trees."

"We thought the shade would keep the house cool," said Mrs. Ryland.

"Yes, but on such low ground it is not a safe way of keeping cool," said Waltham. "Down here by the river-side, buried in shade, you must have a constant excess of damp and noxious vegetable decomposition. Now the other house

is built on higher ground, and the idea of keeping cool is carried out, not by dense, dank shade, but by thick walls and high ceilings suitably roofed over—the only safe way for Europeans to build in this unfriendly climate. I repeat that you made a mistake in venturing to take this house.”

That evening, after tea, as the trio sat talking on the verandah, a faint forewarning of something direful reached them in the shape of an unpleasant odor. “Faugh!” said the Captain, “that smells like a burning body.”

“I fear you are right,” said Ryland, “for I saw a corpse carried past before sunset. Did you not hear the funeral horns?”

“Yes ; but pray how often are your olfactories thus regaled in this house of your choice?”

“Oh,” said Mrs. Ryland, “not *every* time a corpse is burned.”

“I sent to the native authorities,” said Mr. Ryland, “asking that the burning-place might be moved a little farther down the river. They politely acquiesced, and for a time the nuisance

ceased. But the people found it farther than they liked to travel, and gradually edged up again to the old spot. This is one ground of my disappointment in this house."

"But, Robert dear," said his wife, "you know the smell never comes to us except when the wind is in this direction."

Waltham interrupted other reply. "Very possibly," said he, "but this is the prevailing direction of the wind for the entire season; and to change the wind, or even to change the burning-place, is more difficult than to change your house. Go with me to the other house tomorrow. You will be more valued guests than I have entertained in a long time."

The Rylands put in a demurrer to the plan of being Waltham's visitors during the whole period of his stay at Periacoil, and the compromise of forming a mess was suggested. But after a moment's discussion, "Faugh!" cried the Captain, "this is getting too strong. Roasted human flesh—singed hair—charred bones—can any smell be more horribly sickening?"

"We must sit in the house," said Ryland, "and close every door and window on this side. Of course that will cut off the breeze, but what can one do when the air is poisoned with this smell?"

"Boy," said the Captain, "send one of my Lascars to pull the punka." And thus an artificial breeze was made instead of that wafted from the burning-place. Still the hideous odor would find its way through the closed shutters of the windows, wholly without glass as they were. Nor did the air become pure until the little household had spent nearly all the night in broken slumbers.

"Ryland," said the Captain next morning, "I do not stir from this beastly place till we all go together. So pack up and spend the month with me, and if I stay longer, then we will talk of establishing a mess."

Accordingly, the change was made without delay, and but little time elapsed before every one had settled down in a regular routine of duty at the other house. The native village was as

near the one house as the other, though reached by different roads, and the Rylands could carry on their missionary labors as conveniently as before.

One evening, at sunset, while Mr. Ryland was out preaching in the bazaar street, and his wife sat on the verandah, talking with Waltham, the tappal-peon appeared at an unaccustomed hour.

“Oh, home letters!” cried Mrs. Ryland; “how many for me, I wonder? Two this time; one from my father;” and breaking the seal, she found within the envelope a letter and a bill of exchange. As for the Captain, he was already absorbed with a letter from his sister. But looking up presently, he saw that Mrs. Ryland’s face wore an air of pained perplexity. Said he, “No bad news, I trust? Your father is well?”

The Captain was acquainted with the lady’s father, having visited him years before, while Mrs. Ryland was still a child.

“Oh yes,” said she, “papa is in his usual health, but he is anxious about me. He has just met with a Bengal civilian, who tells him

that the second year in India tries the European constitution more severely than the first, and that I ought to sleep under punkas every night of the hot season. Papa writes that as a missionary's salary cannot procure everything, he sends me money expressly to pay punka-pullers.

"A sensible papa," said Waltham, gayly, "and happy in having a purse big and full enough to carry out the promptings of his heart. Pray, why should that make you so grave?"

"Oh," said Mrs. Ryland, "I was thinking how can I use the money so, after all? I was thinking what will people say?"

"People say?" echoed Waltham.

"Yes, about a missionary and his wife spending money to have punkas pulled over them all night?"

"Well, if the missionary has a rich father-in-law who chooses to have punkas pulled at his own expense, who will object?"

"Oh," said Mrs. Ryland, "even if people knew that papa paid the bills, it would make no difference. They would say that missionaries

should be self-denying, and not live in ease and luxury. Oh, if you could read Miss Farley's letters to me! Here is one I have just received. Read it."

The Captain read. After a few opening sentences, the writer proceeded: "I derived peculiar satisfaction from your account of the journey on a heap of straw in the bottom of a rude country cart, and I refer to it now with the more pleasure because I was distressed by your mentioning in a previous letter that you had taken a few hours' journey in a palanquin. I have at times been harassed by fears that you might insensibly fall into the habits of pomp and luxury so prevalent in Oriental countries."

The Captain here looked up and asked, "Who is this Miss Farley?"

"Oh, a friend of mine," said Mrs. Ryland. "I only wish she could have seen the shabby old palanquin she fancies so luxurious. If she knew how little I liked the motion, she would not fear my ever entering a palanquin again if I can avoid it. And as for the journey in a

common cart, I wrote about it, not to Miss Farley, but to papa, simply mentioning it as a good joke. I certainly deserve no credit for riding in that cart, since I did it merely because at the time no other conveyance could be had. I made no boast of it, and when Miss Farley praises me for such an instance of self-denial, she makes me feel like an impostor."

"But, once again, who is this Miss Farley, that you call a friend of yours?"

"Oh, she is a neighbor of papa's—an unmarried, middle-aged lady with a comfortable property. I thought you would remember her pretty place three miles from papa's—Rockside, you know?"

The Captain finally recollected Rockside and its mistress.

"After I came home from school," continued Mrs. Ryland, "Miss Farley used to claim my assistance in her visits to the poor and the sick. As dear mamma was not living, and papa had no thought of marrying again, I think he was glad that Miss Farley could show me how to spend

time usefully. Of course she formed the habit of counseling and advising me, and, as you may judge from this letter, she does so still. Her letters are filled with her own ideas about the self-denial proper to a missionary. Oh, Captain, cannot you see why I am likely to choose the poorest house? Why I cannot bear to order punkas? Why I cannot find enjoyment in the most ordinary comforts or even necessities of Indian life? It is because all these things are so dreadfully misunderstood at home by good people of Miss Farley's stamp, and misconstrued by the actual opposers of missions."

"For that matter, Mrs. Ryland," said the Captain, "you may rest assured that opposers will find something to rail at, do what you will. Why, how was it in the outset? Some of the earlier missionaries necessarily endured great hardships and died very early deaths. Then, oh what a clamor was raised against missions, as involving a useless and wicked waste of human life! Since then, missionary societies have counseled prudence, and missionaries them-

selves have used various sanitary precautions in climates like this. It has even been thought necessary to publish careful statistics, showing that the average duration of missionary life is beyond what had been asserted. Does that silence opposers? Far from it! They turn right about, and declare that missionaries are living lives of ease and luxury. It's like the Jews in the days of Christ: because Jesus went to a marriage—sat down to dinner with any rich man who asked him—or, in short, came 'eating and drinking,' what did they say of him?—'Behold a man gluttonous, a wine-bibber,' But there was John the Baptist, a man who practiced great austerities. Did he get any credit for his life of self-denial? No indeed! The very same opposers said of John, 'He hath a devil.' So comfort yourself, Mrs. Ryland; do what you will, you must expect to be abused and belied by one class of people, and misunderstood and misjudged by a second class, in which I reckon your quixotic friend, Miss Farley. Just keep on trying to please God, and care less, henceforth, if

you fail to please man. I remember that from a child you were more sensitive to one word of disapproval than many children are to a whipping, and I can see now that *your* chief 'missionary trials' will arise from the pain you feel at being judged and condemned by some who really are not qualified to appreciate the circumstances of your every-day life." May you not err by paying too much attention to the opinions of others?"

There was a pause. At length Mrs. Ryland said, "My *reason* assents to what you say, but I cannot control my feelings. Oh, I could bear all the uncalled-for hardships that Miss Farley would have me ostentatiously inflict upon myself—I could bear them as unfalteringly as any popish saint endures his self-appointed penances; but I *cannot* bear such cruel misunderstandings! Yes, such friends pain me more than actual enemies! And the pain I suffer in personal feeling is bad enough, but what is that compared to the pang of thinking that it all may injure the mission cause! The *cause*—the *cause*!"

"Dear Mrs. Ryland, don't get so excited—pray stop wringing your hands," said the Captain.

"I will be calm," said the sensitive little creature; "but just let me tell you how it will be about this matter. Robert will order the punka-men, and write, thanking papa. Dear papa will thank God for giving him means to protect his only daughter from the heat of this climate. Of an evening, when we lie down to sleep, Robert will say, 'How delicious is this breeze! How kind of your father to send us that money!' And shall *I* sleep any better, do you think, Captain? No! I shall be tossing on my pillow, and saying to myself, 'Oh *what* a letter Miss Farley will write when she hears that I am sleeping under a punka!'"





CHAPTER X.

AFTER Rungiah's death, his widow had carefully hidden away his little copy of St. John's Gospel. She had not dared to destroy it, lest she should provoke the god of the white people. Yet she desired to keep it out of Perumal's way, for fear that he might be led to desert his heathen gods and bring upon himself the punishment of sudden death. But the boy discovered the book hidden in a brass pot. Moreover, he had perfectly understood his dying father's request that the whole family might be placed under Christian instruction. Though he found no opportunity for private conference with Mr. Beverly, either on the day of the funeral or at any subsequent visit, yet, by observing perfect silence, he succeeded in being allowed to stand among the listeners when-

ever discussion between the villagers and the missionary occurred. He had become very suspicious that his gods were no gods, but he was too timid to proclaim his convictions. But he experimented in private upon the stone image in the little village temple. Such horror as a well-trained Christian child would feel in making a rude attack upon the symbolic wine and bread of the sacramental altar did Perumal experience, when first, with no human eye looking on, he slapped his idol in the face. Finding, after a moment's terrified expectancy, that his arm was not paralyzed, he went on cuffing and kicking to his heart's content. Then he ran home, but held his peace. Finding, however, as time passed on, that he was suspected of more than indifference to his heathen gods, and that in fact he was closely watched, it became a matter of great perplexity with him to devise a way of reaching Mr. Beverly.

At length, learning from the village gossip that certain public works were in progress at a place called Periacoil, and that Periacoil was beyond

Chinnacotta, though not on the direct road to Illathapet, he formed a plan entirely new. He would go to the Englishman superintending those public works. Perhaps he would be that very gentleman who once came with Mr. Beverly to Anthoor. If not, he still might be a good man. Or, at the very least, if not a good man, he might perhaps give Perumal work enough to pay for his food, day by day, so that he might stay in hiding at Periacoil until his friends, having vainly sought him at Illathapet, should have returned home, leaving his way clear to go to Mr. Beverly. How to ascertain his uncle's movements after his own departure he did not quite know; but at least he would take the first step by escaping to Periacoil, and then let the new God whom he now chose help him if he would.

One fine night, spreading his mat as usual on the ground, he feigned sleep even before others were silent. Not until quite sure that all were slumbering soundly did he venture to rise from his mat. But then he made good speed, reach-

ing Chinnacotta at daybreak. Some people in the bazaar street were already astir, and the shopkeepers were beginning to set out their wares. Of these men Perumal rather ostentatiously inquired the way to Illathapet, taking care to learn at the same time by indirect questions the road to Periacoil. Had it seemed necessary, I am afraid he would even have told a lie; for Perumal, though struggling toward the light, had not yet risen above the Hindu notion that to tell lies in pursuit of a good end is not only excusable but praiseworthy. However, the need of lying was just now superseded by a certain amount of trickery. He walked straight on toward Illathapet, until a turn in the road left Chinnacotta out of sight. Then, creeping through a gap in the cactus hedge, he struck across a field of sugar-cane, which hid him from the view of passers-by without confusing his idea of the bearings of the road to Periacoil. Fearing pursuit, in spite of his artifice, and perhaps speedy capture, he took no rest, until at length he found himself on the

banks of a river where workmen were busy under the eyes of a native maistry (overseer), and also of an English gentleman. Yes, it seemed like the very same whom Perumal had hoped to find; and so he approached the tree under which the gentleman sat and made a timid salaam.

"What is wanting, little brother?"* asked Waltham, for he it was.

"Sir," said Perumal, "did you lose your way one night, traveling in a bullock bandy with another gentleman, and come into a little village called Anthoor?"

"Yes, that was the place, I think," said Waltham.

Then Perumal, breathing a sigh of intense relief, unburdened his mind to the Captain. He told his whole story, begging that he might be hidden from the pursuit of his uncle and put into the way of earning his own rice.

Waltham was delighted with this appeal.

* *Chinna-tumby*, little brother—the ordinary kindly salutation of a boy.

Had any Beaumont been at hand to suggest thoughts of the neutrality policy, he would have answered: "I shall try to do my duty by this boy, and if my course is considered an infringement of neutrality, let the Court of Directors do with me what they choose. I shall obey God rather than man." At present, without an instant's hesitation, he promised Perumal all proper protection, and sent him to rest and refresh himself under another tree of the clump.





CHAPTER XI.

NOW on this very morning, Mr. Ryland, having to draw up his station report for the next home steamer, dismissed his moonshee (teacher of languages) an hour earlier than usual; and this dignitary, being already on very good terms of acquaintanceship with Waltham, stopped at the river's side to chat a while. The moonshee was a tall, well-made man, rather stately and formal in his politeness, and never forgetting his dignity, even in familiar intercourse with old acquaintances. But Waltham's frank and cordial manner had already put Mahremuttu Moodely on the footing of a friend, and they generally had a long conversation every day. Waltham this morning took much interest in relating the story of Perūmal, who now lay as if asleep under a tree at some little distance.

Mahremuttu listened politely, but made little reply. At length Waltham asked, "How is it, Mahremuttu, that you, an educated man, can adhere to a religion whose errors are perceived even by this boy?"

"Oh! 'tis the custom of the country," said Mahremuttu, indifferently.

"But why adhere to bad customs?"

"I cannot say that I consider them bad," said the moonshee.

"Do you, a man of intelligence and education, bow to dumb idols without feeling that you degrade yourself to a level with the senseless stone?"

"Sir," answered Mahremuttu, with dignity, "I do not bow to the senseless stone but to the god who has graciously taken up his abode therein, even as you, sir, believe that your God is graciously present in the churches where you meet to worship him."

Taken by surprise, Waltham could at the moment make no better answer than saying simply, "But *such* an image!"

"Sir, the condescension of God would be infinite, were he to manifest his presence in even the costliest temple ever reared by human hands. But his mercy is so great that he graciously deigns to dwell in any such simple structure or figure as may be suited to the means of a poverty-stricken worshiper. Else only the rich and great could approach him."

Waltham's characteristic eagerness would have prompted an instant reply, but an unwonted degree of prudence began now to govern him. He had opened the discussion with a very cheerful confidence, but he was already finding the moonshee too wily for one so little used to discussing with Hindus. This discovery diverted his attention not only from the obvious answer to Mahremuttu's sophism, but even from the very sophism itself. "Dear me!" thought he, as he meditatively pulled his moustache. "Now how do the missionaries manage these fellows? One needs to use his brains to some purpose; and to know the language with nicety, besides being posted in metaphysics, theology and all that."

At length, falling back on the frankness of his nature, Waltham said: "Now, Mahremuttu, I see you can argue, even if you are not a Brahmin; but as for me, I am not used to this sort of talk. Still, I wish to show you my reasons for thinking you are wrong; so if you will patiently answer the questions I put, and will give me an idea of your views, I will try to gather words for my reply, though I never have learned your language or your system so well as the missionaries do."

This put Mahremuttu again in friendly humor. In any case, he would have argued with all civility; but now every tinge of the irritation one might feel on being the object of attack gave way to a fresh impulse of liking for this frank young English officer. Waltham went on: "You said that God was so condescending as to manifest his presence not only in costly temples but also in rude images. Now you know that I shall argue on my side that there is a vast difference between a temple and an image. The first gives no false idea as to God's nature—

the last gives a lying impression that there is a form, a body, to Him who is only a Spirit."

Mahremuttu replied: "As we are now considering merely my views, I will only say that our religion encourages the use of images in order to fix the attention of the worshiper."

"Let that pass for the present," said Waltham, "and tell me why you have so many millions of gods and goddesses? And how do you know which among them all to worship?"

"Sir," said Mahremuttu, "there is of course but one God, the Eternal, Uncreated, Supreme. As to the multitude of gods and goddesses you charge upon our system, I reply, that while in common parlance, and for convenience' sake, we speak of them as different persons, yet we all allow that, philosophically considered, they are, many of them, mere personifications of various attributes of the Supreme. Others, again, are different incarnations of God. I might ask you to explain why you yourselves claim to worship but one God, and yet constantly speak of three Divine Persons, to each of whom you ascribe

various acts and operations, and to all of whom you pay divine homage, while yet claiming that you are no polytheists."

"As to this question," said Waltham, "I do not pretend that the nature of God is to be discovered by unassisted human reason, but on the contrary, I claim that God himself must reveal it to us. And such a revelation we have in our Bible."

"And so have we in our Vedas," said Mahremuttu.

"Very well," said Waltham; "then which is the true revelation of the true God? Of course you claim truth for your side and I for mine. Now *I* speak from personal conviction. Our Bible I daily read: it may be in the hands of the humblest Englishman. But pray tell me, how many Hindus have ever read their Vedas? Do not the Brahmins keep hidden from other castes those ponderous works? Have you really any personal knowledge of their contents? Are you not forbidden to read or even to hear them? Then how can you assert that the Vedas teach

what you believe and practice, or that their teaching whatever it may be, is true?"

"I admit the disadvantage under which I labor," said Mahremuttu; "and moreover," added he, astutely, "I appeal to your candor not to stand loftily on ground where I cannot reach you, but to adopt the course of comparing our systems, as we understand them, feature by feature."

This appeal would have thrown the generous Waltham off his guard but for his recollecting that he had volunteered to stand in defence of the truth. He might now think himself rash for thus volunteering, but he was not the man to beat a cowardly retreat; so not without some caution he replied:

"Suppose that since I *do* know what it is that my Bible professes to teach, you should now permit me to be speaker for a time and listen to me as I have listened to you."

Mahremuttu assenting, Waltham said:

"Since we both admit that God must reveal himself to us, we shall probably agree that such

revelation must be our rule of faith and of life."

The moonshee did not openly dissent, for his mind was half occupied in considering whether he had not allowed Waltham too great an advantage by admitting the necessity of a revelation. He already saw that he might better have tumbled the Vedas overboard, insisting on the sufficiency of human reason. Certain inconveniences might arise from his acting the character of a Hindu believer. But no matter—he had loopholes to creep out of yet. Meanwhile, Waltham was saying,

"We are told that God is a Spirit, and must be worshiped as such. On the very lowest ground, your idolatrous worship is just so much lost labor, even if it does not positively provoke God to be your enemy."

Mahremuttu interposed: "When you say that God is a Spirit, and must be worshiped as such, I infer that correct outward forms will not satisfy him, unless the spirit also does homage to him. Well, then, it should also be true that if the

spirit of the worshiper be right, if he sincerely render homage to God with his heart, outward forms matter not—God should pardon the ignorance because of the sincere intention.”

“Do you wish to claim,” asked Waltham, “that the unspeakably filthy ceremonies of some of your temple-services ought to be as pleasing to a pure and holy God as the spiritual worship of a Christian church?”

Looking on Waltham's open face, and into the depths of his clear gray eyes, Mahremuttu could not summon the effrontery to defend anything so vile. He therefore was silent, and Waltham went on: “But we need not argue the point, since God has himself expressly forbidden image-worship. Idolatry is therefore a grievous sin. How shall the sinner appease an offended God? Your religion provides certain atonements—not indeed for idolatry, which it does not call a sin. But since, among all men, there will sometimes be stirrings of conscience and a sense of guilt, your religion prescribes pilgrimages, washings in the sacred Ganges, and self-tortures of an excru-

ciating sort. Now tell me, Mahremuttu, do you think these things will turn away the wrath of God?"

Mahremuttu was moved, but would not confess it. So after a pause he said:

"I have no ambition to carry the discussion any farther. We started at first from your assumption that homage to idols could not be defended by a man of intelligence. I have merely been showing you what might be said in its behalf by those educated men who do practice it. I do not profess to have spoken throughout my own convictions."

"How?" asked the Captain, flushing with injured feeling. "Do I understand that you have been talking merely for the sake of argument? Have you let me thus labor to no purpose at all? For you must see that it has been laborious for me to discuss in your language on subjects which I do not pretend to have studied professionally."

The moonshee, too polite to retort that Waltham had urged discussion, merely replied: "I

thought you would be glad of a little practice in speaking my language."

"No," said Waltham, "I spoke from a very sincere desire for your personal welfare. And since I am not prompted by impertinent curiosity, but by a real regard for you, pardon me if I still press the subject. Am I then to understand that you do *not* practice idol-worship?"

"Oh, 'tis not best to forsake the customs of one's own caste. Yes, I worship images, because other people do."

"You did not try to disprove my assertion that idolatry must be displeasing to God. Tell me, are you not afraid of provoking him?"

The moonshee, having by this time chosen new ground, began afresh: "I do not understand what you mean by provoking God. As I am part of God myself, how can I provoke myself? You deemed me, just now, a polytheist. So far from that, I believe in the unity of God to the fullest possible extent. I believe God is One, in the sense that he is absolutely the Only Existence. I hold that my soul is not only an ema-

nation from him, but is still a part of him—is still himself. There is in all the universe not one personality, human or divine, distinct from him.”

This emphatic avowal of Vedantic pantheism silenced the Captain for a moment. He recollected having heard Mr. Beverly say to a younger missionary, “Until you are well acquainted with Hindu philosophy, as well as with the vernacular and the Sanscrit, be very careful that the Hindus do not drag you upon the standing-ground of Vedantism. They will try to do so whenever you press the point of their own personal guilt.” Recollecting, too late, this warning, the Captain tried hard to remember what had been laid down as the method of discussion should discussion become inevitable. But just now, to gain a little time, he only looked up and asked :

“If I should toil over this new ground with you, and should drive you off it, I suppose you would once more claim that you had only been talking for the sake of argument. You surely

do not believe what you have said?" And he looked full into the moonshee's sharp black eyes.

"And why should I not believe it?" was the evasive rejoinder. "What system could be more absolutely faultless?"

Being no metaphysician, Waltham could only proceed in the practical, common-sense manner of the English mind. Looking Mahremuttu straight in the eyes again, he said: "*You know you are yourself, an individual, a being quite distinct from God.*"

"Oh, as to what you call the 'consciousness of personal identity,'" said Mahremuttu, loftily, "that is the effect of what we call *maya*, or illusory influence. This *maya* is what causes you to behold, as you imagine, a visible, material world, external to yourself, when in fact there is no such thing as matter at all. This *maya* produces all those shadows, dreams, phantasms which you mistake for material realities. But I affirm that spirit alone exists."

After another long stare into the moonshee's

eyes, Waltham found his thoughts drifting toward poor old King Lear's perplexity :

"I will not swear these are my hands; let's see—
I feel this pin prick."

This suggested a line of argument, the only one he could frame. Said he: "You ought then, for consistency's sake, utterly to ignore what I call bodily necessities. If there be no such thing as food, it ought never to get into what I call your mouth."

"Just so," assented the moonshee, readily. "But the influence called maya produces on me so strong an illusion of what you call bodily hunger that I proceed to feed myself, as you would say."

Waltham laughed aloud. This did not offend the moonshee, who was only anxious to banish serious conversation. With an air as if he had been a Brahmin of Brahmins, or had any right to the highest hopes of Vedantism, he continued, "I admit the inconsistency of this, and I acknowledge the duty of striving after freedom from this illusory influence. By this course I shall arrive

at the state of those exalted men who feel neither pleasure nor pain, who have neither desire nor aversion, neither likes nor dislikes. This will be what you call virtue. When the insults of men cannot move me to anger, and the clamors of the flesh cannot excite in me covetousness or lust of any sort, my state of repose will be a faint likeness to that of the Supreme One, the Uncreated, Infinite BRAHM, and I shall at length become ready for reabsorption into himself."

But now the sun had moved in its course till its rays fell at the feet of Waltham, who accordingly pushed his camp-chair a little nearer the trunk of the tree behind which Perumal lay. The moonshee, too, arose, and would have chosen the deeper shade.

"No, no," said Waltham, "now is your chance to free yourself a little more from the illusory influence. Sit where you were—scorching sunshine and cooling shade should be all one to a philosopher like yourself."

With deepest gravity Mahremuttu turned to resume his former seat. Now it so happened

that a flourishing prickly-pear grew at the foot of that same tree, close beside the spot where the moonshee had sat. Waltham only saw a little figure rolling over and over on the ground behind the tree, and next, the quick motion of a little hand guiding the straggling cactus; but in another moment the moonshee, sitting down, found himself upon a cushion of prickly-pear, and started up with such a grimace that philosophic consistency was completely gone. The Captain did not triumph in Perumal's interference, but as the boy had once more assumed the attitude of profound slumber, reproofs were deferred for a time. At present, Waltham slyly remarked to the moonshee, "I suppose that your philosophic spirit not being really ruffled in the least, it is I who am under the illusory influence in fancying an expression of dreadful disgust upon your features."

But the moonshee, who thought he had succeeded in warding off serious conversation, was willing enough now to throw off his second mask. "Oh, as you say, I was only arguing,"

quoth he. "Shall I now take leave and return again to-morrow?"

"Stay a moment," said Waltham, whose finely-cut and mobile features had instantly settled into a serious tenderness. "I find, Mahremuttu, that you are determined not to acknowledge your real sentiments, whatever they are. But I doubt not, in your secret heart, you feel your own individual responsibility. And when the consciousness of personal guilt weighs you down, remember that in the Christian revelation you are told of the only true Saviour for sinners. Remember! Yes, go now, and return again. Salaam."





CHAPTER XII.

IN Waltham's return to the house, Mr. Ryland at once noticed Perumal as a stranger and a boy of good caste. This led to a recital of his story. "And I must tell you," added the Captain, "that this promising proselyte has not forgotten his Hindu tricks, even though he has discovered that his idols are humbugs."

"Why should you think him tricky?" asked Ryland.

"Oh, I do not mean that he is deceitful and untruthful on important subjects. He did nothing worse than play a practical joke on your moonshee. The matter was thus: I rashly entered upon a discussion with Mahremuttu, and found to my chagrin that the merest smattering of Vedantism from the lips of an intelli-

gent Sudra was enough to perplex me dreadfully. My self-confidence was rapidly sinking, and my respect for the missionaries was rising as fast, when this lad ended the discussion as you shall hear;" and Waltham gave the particulars at length, to the amusement of the missionary and his wife.

During the day a regular routine of duty was chosen for Perumal. He was to go early each morning to observe the work at the river, and to make himself useful to the Captain. At ten o'clock he was to return and be present at the devotional exercises of the school, after which he could spend the remainder of the day in study. In this new life Perumal shortly found himself greatly interested. Each day, at four in the afternoon, he came with the other pupils to be examined by Mrs. Ryland as to the progress made during the day under the native master. In truth, Perumal found more food for curiosity in watching Mrs. Ryland than in anything else. Trained, like other Hindus, to disbelieve in the mental education of any women except those

unfortunate females employed in the vile mysteries of temple-service, it was to him a marvel that Mr. Ryland should encourage and assist his wife in the study of the native language and native books. After closely observing her for several days, he said to himself, "Truly, this Christian lady is not spoiled by knowing how to read. I wonder if other Englishwomen, after being educated, have the excellent sense and the good disposition of this one?"

All this time Perumal rigidly adhered to the rules of his caste. His convictions regarding Christianity were not yet strong enough to make him break through restrictions which had hitherto been to him as sacred as his life. He looked with horror on the idea of eating the food prepared for his English friends, because Captain Waltham's cook was a pariah. Even when satisfied that the cook wore clean clothes and washed his hands, it made no difference. A person born beneath him was, in Perumal's eyes, for ever unclean; and he would perhaps have eaten food prepared by a loathsome

leper of his own caste sooner than that cooked by the neatest pariah. Now the Captain knew better than to use compulsion in the matter, and Mr. Ryland, of course, held that renunciation of caste must be a voluntary act in order to be of any worth. Both, therefore, kept silence, while Perumal concocted little messes of curry and rice in pots never touched by pariahs, cheerfully exercising his limited knowledge of cookery rather than lose his caste. Yet the boy knew perfectly, that he could not be allowed to join the Christian Church without practically demonstrating his renunciation of this Hindu restriction; and this one thing, more than any other, held him back from taking any public position beyond that of a mere inquirer.

When a week had passed by, the Captain said to Perumal, "I must go to Illathapet this evening, and shall return within a day or two. If I find that your uncle has sought for you there, and abandoned the search in despair, I suppose you would wish to go without further delay to Mr. Beverly, would you not?"

Perumal's countenance fell at once. It had doubtless been his original purpose to go ultimately to Illathapet, as that was the plan marked out by his late father for his instruction in Christianity. But there never had been an opportunity for his forming a personal attachment to Mr. Beverly, whom he merely knew as a truthful and sincere representative of the Christian faith, while now one week's intimate association with Waltham had aroused in Perumal's heart an admiring gratitude he had never felt before. He began timidly to express his sorrow at leaving Waltham.

"Never fear, little brother!" exclaimed the Captain; "if you choose my guardianship, I will faithfully strive to promote your welfare. But reflect a moment, that when your uncle makes further inquiries, he will be likely to learn that there are missionaries here, and, knowing your purpose of becoming a Christian, he will come here seeking for you. If he has given up the search in Illathapet, would it not be safest for you to go there quietly for a few days, until he

has been here and failed to find you? Besides, this place is under the jurisdiction of the Mr. Beaumont whom you so much fear at Chinna-cotta, and he would doubtless aid your uncle in regaining his hold upon your person."

Thus instructed, Perumal was only too ready to change his hiding-place as soon as the Captain should judge that the time had come for doing so.





CHAPTER XIII.

WALTHAM'S augury as to Ramasamy's movements had been very correct, but he had failed as to his calculations of time by only a few hours. On the very morning when the Captain was expected back from Illathapet, Ramasamy had already arrived at Periacoil. His time had been spent thus: A day had sufficed for gaining traces of Perumal at Chinnacotta, and naturally he had gone on to Illathapet. Two days of fruitless search had been followed by a return to Chinnacotta for the purpose of making more minute inquiries. Yes, the boy who had asked about the road to Illathapet certainly answered to the description of Perumal. Yes, he had not only inquired the direction of each road leading out of the village, but had carefully chosen that which went to

Illathapet, and had left the village by that way and no other. So Ramasamy set out on another fruitless search, longer than the first, near Mr. Beverly's premises. Not a trace could be found, and he was returning home in great perplexity when a shopkeeper in Chinnacotta bazaar suggested that Perumal might have merely passed through Illathapet on his way to some other place.

"No," said Ramasamy, "he was longing to find at Illathapet a certain Englishman, who was alas! the teacher of a new religion."

"Oh, the Christian religion you mean," said the bazaar-man. "He might have found a Christian teacher nearer by. There is one in Periacoil."

And now Ramasamy, by a few more questions, learned the probability of a stratagem which had cost him so many days of fruitless search, and the early dawn of the following day found him in Periacoil. Here a few inquiries led him, first to Mr. Ryland's former abode, and next, a few more helped him to find his temporary residence. No question of his led to the mention of Wal-

tham's name, nor did he dream that the premises to which he traced Perumal belonged to any other Englishman than Mr. Ryland. Having reached the gate, with certain allies not far distant, Ramasamy paused to plan a plausible line of behavior, when events so far favored him that Perumal, coming out at an early hour on his way to the river, met his uncle face to face. At once the boy shrank back within the gateway, but Ramasamy, with feigned indifference, began: "Ah! here you are! And so, on the whole, you have decided to join the Christians? All very well, if your new gods are strong enough to protect you against the old ones. Only I wonder how you could bear to fall from your rightful position down to the level of pariahs."

"Oh, I have not broken caste," said Perumal, with a haste which he immediately regretted, though unable to understand such regret.

This was all Ramasamy wished to know. "That is well," said he. "Be a Christian if you like, only don't do anything to make your friends loathe you, and turn you out of the house

like a dog. Your poor mother would have it that you were lost for ever. Day by day, sick with grief, she has torn her hair and beaten her breast, saying, 'My boy, whom I bore and nursed, turns his back on me, now that I am a lonely widow. Even this grief I might endure, but he has sunk among vile outcasts, and I can never look on him again.' I told her not to fear, for I knew you had too much self-respect to forget your birth. I told her you would not so willingly forfeit your claim to the hand of your beautiful betrothed. Oh, Perumal, when you see this lovely creature on the day of your nuptials, you will marvel at her beauty. I myself, when I went with your father to arrange the match, could not restrain my surprise at her charms. Though then but eight years old, she deported herself with the dignity of a woman. She performs the duties of the toilet with scrupulous care. On that day her lovely oval face was newly bathed with saffron-water, rendering her complexion delicately yellow. Her long black eyelashes swept her cheeks, and were seldom

raised, so great was her gentle modesty. The polished jewel hanging from her nostrils glittered only less brightly than her brilliant black eyes. Her long, glossy black hair was looped up with wreaths of delicate white flowers of sweetest perfume. When her mother bade her prepare for our evening repast, she at once, with gentlest obedience, went to the tank for water. I saw her return, bringing on her head a waterpot almost as heavy as her mother might have borne. One round and taper arm, bare from the shoulder to the wrist, was stretched upward, so that the tips of the slender fingers might just steady the burden on her head. Though her youthful figure was so graceful and so light, yet the effort of carrying her waterpot imparted to her gait a becoming steadiness, so that her step was as majestic as that of a young elephant."

With this superb climax Ramasamy paused. So far from exciting mirth, the comparison of the elephant's tread was to Perumal's Hindu mind the highest praise that could be bestowed on a woman's gait. After a little pause, he

observed: "I am truly thankful that the wife chosen for me is so beautiful and so obedient. As for me, I am now learning something of engineering, by observing and aiding in the work that is going on at the river. When I have learned enough to be sure of earning a good living, I will gladly marry." Perumal was on the point of adding that until that time Captain Waltham would befriend him, but this remark was never uttered, because Ramasamy interrupted with the exclamation, "Alas! you will then be too old to marry! Consider that you are nearly fourteen."

"I shall be fourteen next month, it is true," said Perumal.

"It's all the same," said Ramasamy. "You did not trust me with your plans, or ask me to provide for your present support. And know this, Perumal, your wife will have a good dower."

Just here the tall form of Mr. Ryland's moonshee cast its shadow at Perumal's feet, and the boy, looking up, met a sharp glance

from Mahremuttu's small, keen eyes. Ramasamy hastily turned around, but observing the heathen marks rubbed across Mahremuttu's forehead, his alarm subsided. The moonshee was not going through the gate, or he would not have worn his heathen marks. Mr. Ryland had stipulated that he should come to his morning duties with forehead smooth and black, unmarked by the signs of his god. But this day was a holiday which he had bargained for by consenting to the loss of so much pay; and now, before setting off for some village where a wedding-feast was to be held at night, he had bathed and rubbed his forehead with the sacred ashes. Yes, he was safe, for it was a heathen casually passing down the street, Ramasamy thought; and so thinking, turned again to Perumal. But whether Mahremuttu had lingered or had overheard anything before they saw him, he himself could best have told.

"How dared I mention my plans?" said Perumal. "You forget the threats you made whenever you suspected my designs."

"But you ought to remember," said Ramasamy, "that my opinion of Christians was influenced by what you and your father reported about those men at Chinnacotta, who offered you beef and pretended that all Christians were obliged to eat it. But if you can become a Christian without breaking caste, perhaps you could persuade all our village to follow your example. You could marry and settle down among us as our teacher."

Now Perumal's heart had begun to yearn over his mother and his little brother, Muttu. Moreover, the picture of his chosen wife had pleased his fancy. Yet he paused.

A Hindu money-changer, sitting cross-legged on the floor of his little shop in the bazaar, twirling one silver coin after another with a snap of his thumb, will detect the ring of the false metal in a bad rupee, though it be one among a thousand good ones. Scarcely less positive was Perumal's conviction that his uncle was acting a lying part. While he hesitated, aid stood near. The moonshee, while passing

the premises, had observed the Captain's Eurasian servant, Billy, standing behind the huge gate-post, listening to all that Ramasamy said. To Billy the moonshee's sharp little eyes had telegraphed the message, "Take good care of Perumal;" and Billy's eyes, with a nod of his head, had answered, "Trust me for that." So now, while Perumal hesitated, Billy called aloud, "Go in and consult the missionary."

The boy looked up and said to his uncle, "I greatly desire, sir, to see my little brother and my dear mother. But before laying my plans I must consult the friends who now protect me, and I wish that you would come with me at once to see the missionary."

"I will not talk with him," said Ramasamy; "and since you are obstinate, I must force you to obey."

At these words several men sprang from their place of concealment around the corner of the garden-wall and ran toward the boy. But Perumal was too wary and fleet, and the instant he was within the gate, Billy slammed it in the face

of his pursuers, while Perumal ran up to the house.

"Sir," said he, entering Mr. Ryland's presence with haste, "my uncle is here, and would have seized me to carry me away."

"Then," said the missionary "keep within doors till Captain Waltham returns. When he arrives, you will perhaps be sent at once to Illathapet."

"Sir," said Perumal, "if you judge me fitted for the solemn ordinance, I should wish to be baptized without delay."

Mr. Ryland was for a moment silent through very gladness. Then, with necessary caution, he inquired into Perumal's motives.

"I have long been a Christian by conviction," said the boy; "but there was one thing which held me back—the desire of maintaining my social rank among Hindus. Now, at length, I feel that I must soon choose between my relatives and my Saviour. I realize for the first time that it is impossible to stand well with both. I must range myself at once, and openly."

“Have you thought of a Christian name?” asked Mr. Ryland.

“I should like to be called Daniel, sir, for I feel that ‘my soul is among lions,’ and that God alone can protect me.”

Continued examination developed the fact that during these few days Perumal had studied almost exclusively the Old Testament, which, before reaching Periacoil, he had never seen. The Scripture portions distributed in Anthoor by Mr. Beverly had been copies of the Gospels, but now, Perumal had discovered that there was “a gospel in Ezekiel,” or in any other part of the Scriptures where he chose to read. The amount of truth stored in the boy’s memory and in his heart comforted Mr. Ryland with the hope that he would be safely carried through such trials as God might appoint.





CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN Waltham at length arrived, he was somewhat chagrined on finding that matters had reached such a pass. "Nevertheless," said he, "if I can only get the boy safely placed in Illathapet before it occurs to Ramasamy to bring legal aid, we shall triumph yet." So, during breakfast, the friends discussed various plans for the journey. "As to my bandy," said the Captain, "I have an idea which may be worth something. No matter now; but after prayers I shall visit the stables myself."

So breakfast was despatched, and every one sat down while Mr. Ryland read and prayed in the language of his native pupils, who had assembled on the front verandah of Waltham's house for prayers. Before dismissing them, he

appointed one o'clock as the hour for the baptism. The Captain then put on his pith hat, and, opening a white umbrella, walked out through the rear verandah toward the stables. The native master marched his scholars down the avenue and out at the gate; Mr. and Mrs. Ryland went to the study to learn lessons without a moonshee; the servants dispersed to their duties; and soon the house was so silent that only the ticking of the clock was heard. Perumal had walked after the Captain a few paces only, and now sat in the rear verandah meditating and reading his favorite book of the prophet Daniel. Very shortly two or three natives came through the front gate, and presently others, until a dozen men had surrounded the house. In another moment Perumal saw a strange Hindu approaching him in what seemed a suspicious manner. Instinctively the boy rose and ran toward the stables in search of Captain Waltham, followed by one after another of the lurking strangers. Oh where *was* the Captain? Perumal feared he might miss him. His pur-

suers were gaining fast, and there seemed no way of eluding their grasp. But in another moment, rushing around the corner of the stable-buildings, Perumal saw in a flash his way to safety. The Captain's horsekeeper, seated on the ground, was making a hearty meal after the fatigues of his journey. He was dipping his hand into the dish, and tossing the first handful into his mouth, when he was arrested by the sudden apparition of Perumal, who, panting from haste and fright, sank down upon his knees beside the astonished pariah and thrust his hand into the rice and curry. A second and a third handful had he flung into his mouth, when his pursuers, rushing into view, saw at a glance the horrid, blasting sight. Perumal had broken his caste!

Cries of disgust and horror were mingled with those of fury. While some shrank back with loathing, others were shouting, "Kill him! kill him!" when Captain Waltham pushed his way into the group. "What are you making a riot for upon *my* premises, you rascals?" cried he; and at the sight of this one Englishman the

invading Hindus fled by any path that might lead to the outer gate. One fellow, springing through a gap in the cactus hedge, set his foot too near a cobra's nest, and was instantly confronted by the angry snake. Making his humble salaam to the serpent he dared not kill, the brutish idolater ran off at the top of his speed. Perumal, looking up into Waltham's face, said: "I am safe, sir, from my uncle. He will never look at me again, now that I have broken caste. Cannot I remain here with you?"

"Come with me to Mr. Ryland, and see what he thinks," said the Captain. "And by the way, was your uncle here himself?"

"I did not see him," replied Perumal, "but he may have been lurking outside."

"Yes," said the Captain, "and he may have been on his way to Chinnacotta, to ask Mr. Beaumont for legal aid in getting you back. Is he not your guardian since your father's death?" Perumal's face now fell. "But we will see what Mr. Ryland thinks," added Waltham.

It was finally deemed safe to delay the journey,

which had been fixed for three, until the sun should be one hour nearer setting. But the journey, as it fell out, was not to be made at all.

Once more had Waltham accurately foreseen Ramasamy's movements. That worthy had sped back to Chinnacotta in an agony of haste, the men of his own caste living in Periacoil having advised that step, and promised to watch during his absence for a chance to carry off the boy. The effort had failed, as we have seen. Shortly after the solemn ordinance of baptism was over, Perumal, sitting within an alcove in front of Waltham's room, saw approaching, another strange Hindu, whose dress was peculiar in respect that he wore, over one shoulder and beneath the opposite arm, a strip of spotted leopard-skin, bound and lined with blood-red cotton. That the man was a police-peon was farther proved by the lettering upon the brass plate affixed to the strip of leopard-skin.

Perumal quietly summoned the Captain, who walked out upon the verandah and mechanically reached out his hand for the document that he

knew the peon would produce. But upon examining it, Mr. Ryland's name was found; so Waltham, followed by Perumal, went in search of the missionary.

Ramasamy had deposed that Perumal, being yet a minor, had been enticed away from him, his guardian, by Mr. Ryland, a missionary, and had been by him secreted on his premises, and by him restrained from returning home when ordered by his lawful guardian so to do. The document brought by the peon summoned Mr. Ryland to produce the boy Perumal next day before Mr. Beaumont and answer to Ramasamy's charge.

"The rascal has overshot the mark," cried Waltham. "The boy never asked *your* protection, never came to *your* premises. *I* am the criminal, not you."

"If it seems the right and proper course," said the missionary, in his usual calm, deliberate way, "I am ready to go at once and make my deposition that the boy sought out you, asked your protection, and has since been on your

premises, for which you alone pay rent; that I am here this month simply as your visitor, sheltered and fed at your sole expense; that I have no sort of control over the boy, and, except I first obtain your and his consent, I cannot produce him in court."

"Yes," said the Captain, "and meanwhile I could be carrying the boy out of Beaumont's immediate jurisdiction. According to the technicalities of the law it could not, I suppose, be challenged as punishable. But in that case Perumal would owe his escape to a legal quibble, or rather informality. How does the plan strike you?"

"If, after deliberation and prayer, it seemed *right* morally, I should not care if, legally, it subjected me to punishment," said the missionary. "If it be right in God's eyes that I should choose this method of screening a young convert from persecution, then I will go forward and let Mr. Beaumont do with me as he likes."

"He dare not do anything illegal!" cried the Captain. "Nevertheless, it is scarcely to my

taste to do what looks like running away from danger. I confess I should better like to march boldly up and *force* this Beaumont to be just. See here! Perumal could demand that the court make me his guardian, on the plea that his present guardian, Ramasamy, prevents his fulfilling the dying orders of his father—about going to Mr. Beverly, you know.”

There was a pause for consideration, and then Mr. Ryland observed: “You have a soldierly aversion to flying from danger. I, on my part, have a conscientious scruple against seeming to resist the ‘powers that be,’ and which ‘are ordained of God.’ Were the case my own, I should not avail myself of any legal informality. Besides, my position as a missionary, still more than my feelings as a private Christian, would lead me to show these Hindus an example of obedience to the legal authorities. Doubtless your views of duty coincide with mine in this case, but I think Perumal himself, or Daniel, as we may now call the dear boy, should express his own wishes and opinions.”

"Right," said Waltham. Then the missionary, turning to Perumal, stated the case clearly and simply. The boy listened, and after a little serious reflection, said to Mr. Ryland :

"Sir, I very well know that Mr. Beaumont would favor my uncle, who is a heathen, sooner than favor me, who am a Christian. But when my uncle hears of my having lost caste, I think he will let me go."

"Are you sure he would not wish to get hold of you in order to revenge the disgrace you have brought on your friends?" asked the missionary.

Perumal looked troubled. "It might be, sir. But Captain Waltham promises to ask Mr. Beaumont to make him my guardian, and I think Mr. Beaumont cannot refuse *him*," said Waltham's artless admirer.

"Do not rely upon my success," said the Captain, "though I shall do my best."

"In short," said Mr. Ryland, "if we are to take you before the collector, you must be prepared for the worst. Count, now, the cost.

Could you bear all that might follow our failure to establish a claim over you?"

"I can trust in God," said the boy. "And I can hardly be worse off than were Daniel and his three friends in Babylon."

"So you quite decline flying from this trial?"

"Sir, I wish now to adopt the bold, straightforward course you English love best, rather than the stratagems that are natural to us Hindus. I wish to become like my dear Captain Waltham."

"*We English*, alas!" said the missionary. "We, too, are sometimes driven to stratagems." But Waltham turned his head to hide a tear.





CHAPTER XV.

AT the period of our story, a collector's cutcherry was little less than a court, in which were tried many cases bearing upon the collection of revenue very remotely, if at all. The line of demarcation between the judicial and the revenue departments had not yet been so clearly defined as might have been expected under an ordinary government. Such irregularities were owing very much to the gradual manner in which the East India Company had changed from a commercial into a governing power.

While Ryland and Waltham, with Perumal in charge, journeyed toward Chinnacotta next morning, the missionary said: "I must caution you just once, my dear Waltham, to keep perfectly calm."

"Oh, if you mean my hasty temper," said the Captain, "I can say, without boasting, that under intense and prolonged excitement like this I am quite raised above the danger of angry passion. Not but that I may be driven into a righteous indignation, however," he added, smilingly.

"I did not mean your hasty temper, but (let us say) your quick temperament, which may lead you off on some side issue not material to the grand question."

"I acknowledge my danger," said the Captain, "and will do my best to keep out of it. But now let us review the various expedients we spoke of last night. I can tell you, as well to-day as I could to-morrow, Mr. Beaumont's course toward *you*. After a calm and dignified hearing of the case, he will blandly remark that the evidence fails to sustain the charge against Mr. Ryland, and will politely add that Mr. Ryland quits the court free of censure. But that, observe, leaves Perumal on hand."

"Yes; and the point is, to successfully hinder the uncle from carrying off the boy."

“Precisely. And Perumal’s request to be put under my guardianship may be declined by Mr. Beaumont. It can be appealed, of course, but meanwhile the uncle makes off with the boy, unless my other plan for forestalling that should succeed. Well, we shall see.”

When Mr. Ryland took the boy Perumal into the cutcherry, even the undemonstrative Mr. Beaumont slightly raised his eyebrows on seeing that Captain Waltham made a third. He of course knew that Waltham was engaged in certain government works at Periacoil, and also that he had of late years grown more and more intimate with missionaries ; but both these facts seemed inadequate to account for his presence. Under the circumstances, Mr. Beaumont simply expressed his pleasure at seeing the Captain, adding, “I will inquire how I can serve you as soon as I have disposed of a little matter claiming my attention at this hour. Mr. Ryland, I observe, responds punctually to the summons I sent him.”

“The next case, then, is that of Mr. Ryland?”

The collector bowed. Waltham added, looking at the time, "We have been at some pains to arrive a few minutes earlier than the hour mentioned in the summons, hoping that you would first dispose of my business, which cannot take many minutes."

Mr. Beaumont was ready to oblige the Captain.

"I wish to make my deposition concerning a case of assault and battery, accompanied by some tumult, which occurred within my compound yesterday morning. And I request that you will summon the parties whom I shall name to appear before you to-morrow, or any other day convenient to yourself."

While the deposition was being taken, a fat Brahmin of the cutcherry whispered to Ramasamy: "No matter; if the collector gives you the boy to-day, you can send him safely off. Come yourself to-morrow, if summoned. You can prove that you were absent from the scene at the time of the riot."

This Brahmin was acting, in consideration of

a sufficient fee, as Ramasamy's vakeel, or lawyer—vast condescension compared with the ancient days, when a Brahmin would not help a Sudra to save his life.

Waltham's deposition being ended, the collector quietly remarked: "The Ramasamy whom you name as probable instigator is, I suppose, the same who appears as complainant in Mr. Ryland's case?"

Waltham assented.

"If others mentioned in your deposition are now present, as well as Ramasamy, I can hear the case to-day before cutcherry hours are over."

"Most of the persons named are probably absent," said Waltham. "And I cannot be ready with my witnesses before to-morrow."

Mr. Beaumont therefore ordered the summons issued for next day. Captain Waltham then remarked: "I require that the boy Perumal be retained as a witness."

"Certainly," said the collector. "He can be summoned like others. Nothing farther will be necessary."

"Something farther may or may not be necessary," replied Waltham, firmly. "But we will speak of that hereafter."

This business took, after all, a very few minutes of the time belonging to the other case. But presently all was ready for the hearing of evidence in support of Ramasamy's complaint. Mr. Beaumont's course in hearing this case was ludicrously like Waltham's prophetic sketch. The testimony on both sides having been given in, Mr. Beaumont remarked: "It is evident that the defendant is innocent of the charge. It also appears that the complainant was naturally led into the error of believing that he spoke truth in making the complaint. Captain Waltham has named himself as the gentleman on whose premises the boy Perumal had chosen to reside. In addition, Captain Waltham has had the forethought to produce the boy without unnecessary delay or tedious formalities. Nothing now remains but that Perumal return to his lawful guardian, Ramasamy."

Perumal looked up at Captain Waltham,

who, stepping forward, said, slowly and distinctly,

“The boy Perumal, lately baptized Daniel, having arrived at years of discretion, chooses me as his guardian, and desires his choice confirmed in court, on the ground that his present guardian, Ramasamy, persistently opposes his endeavor to carry out the dying command of his late father.”

It seemed for an instant as if a thunderbolt had fallen, so absolute was the hush. Then silence was broken by the voice of the Tamil interpreter, who repeated in a loud voice, for the benefit of the other party, what Waltham had just said in English.

Mr. Beaumont then said, “The request is of a nature so unusual that I know not how far it may be within my power to grant it. I shall require twenty-four hours for examining the question and seeking precedents. The case can be heard at this time to-morrow.”

Waltham rejoined: “If the case be deferred till to-morrow, the boy Perumal demands, during

the interval, the protection of Mr. Beaumont, well knowing that if he is left in his uncle's hands for twenty-four hours he will be spirited away far beyond the possibility of appeal to a Company's court of justice."

The very slight additional emphasis on the word *justice* did not escape Mr. Beaumont's ear. He saw that Waltham was driving him into the position of Perumal's protector. Meantime, he could not withdraw his gaze from Waltham's eyes, which, though in fact only gray, now blazed brilliantly black with intensity of purpose, and looked as if they read the very secrets of Beaumont's soul. While thus they riveted the collector's gaze by a sort of fascination, the welcome voice of Ramasamy's vakeel came to break the spell. The portly Brahmin said that his client desired to know precisely what he stood charged with, that he might prepare his defence during the twenty-four hours which would elapse before the case was heard.

Waltham replied: "The late father of the boy Perumal, while dying, made a request regarding

the education of his family, which request Ramasamy positively declines to perform."

But the vakeel wished for something more explicit, and therefore pressed the point. Waltham accordingly replied, without further hesitation or delay :

"The late Rungiah, father to the boy Perumal, desired that after his death his family might be sent to Illathapet, to the missionary Mr. Beverly, for the purpose of being by him instructed in the Christian religion."

This was as plainly stated as the vakeel could desire, for Mr. Beaumont at once remarked :

"It seems necessary for me to instruct both parties that it would be a breach of neutrality for me to permit religious discussion in this place. If the case necessarily involve points of religion, I cannot give it a hearing."

"The case may be judged on its own merits," said Waltham. "I should of course do injustice to Mr. Beaumont if I hoped to prepossess him in favor of the boy Perumal by making prominent his desire of being a Christian—I may even say,

the fact that he is now a baptized Christian. In like manner, the other party would reflect injuriously upon Mr. Beaumont's character for impartiality did they hope, by making the religious question prominent, to prejudice Mr. Beaumont against Perumal."

Waltham uttered these last words with his eye fixed on the vakeel, but they were of course an answer to what Mr. Beaumont had said. He then added :

"If the other party should to-morrow choose to cross-examine my witnesses so closely as to force the mention of Christianity, that is no affair of mine. All I ask is, that Mr. Beaumont decide these questions: Has not Ramasamy forfeited his claim to the guardianship of Perumal by refusing to fulfill certain commands of the dying Rungiah, be those commands what they may? And has not Perumal therefore a right to choose a new guardian?"

While this was being (like everything else) interpreted, the vakeel decided on an expedient worth trying. After conferring with Ramasamy,

he proclaimed aloud that his client disputed the statement that Perumal had arrived at years of discretion. Was Mr. Beaumont prepared to take evidence as to the boy's age?

Here Waltham interposed. If Mr. Beaumont chose to take such evidence at once, the boy perhaps need not object, but he trusted the collector might delay his decision until the time he had himself appointed, and that he would make the thorough search after precedents which he had himself declared necessary on his part before rendering judgment.

Mr. Beaumont could not but adhere to his own proposition. He, however, decided to take evidence at once as to Perumal's age.

Ramasamy testified under oath that Perumal would be thirteen years old next month.

There was an instant gleam of triumph in Waltham's eyes. He, however, maintained a resolute silence, and also checked Perumal's indignant exclamation. Meanwhile the vakeel summoned one witness after another, who all, with singular unanimity, swore that Perumal

lacked one month of being thirteen. Mr. Beaumont at length languidly inquired how much more corroboration of Ramasamy's oath was to be offered? The vakeel as listlessly answered that the taking of evidence might be suspended whenever the collector chose; that he might summon the whole village of Anthoor without hearing any other account of Perumal's age. And who, by the by, knew this better than the vakeel? For it was he himself who, after consulting Ramasamy, had telegraphed back to the witness-room, by signals imperceptible to English eyes, the message that Perumal must on no account be more than thirteen years old next month.

Mr. Beaumont now offered to hear Perumal's testimony. The boy, having taken his oath after the Christian manner (Ramasamy's had been a heathen oath), stated that he would be *fourteen* next month. And here the case rested for the day.

"I think you have it!" cried the vakeel to Ramasamy. "No matter what is proved to-

morrow about the wishes of your late brother, our worthy collector will find a recent case in which a boy past fourteen was allowed to choose for himself in matters of religion. He will admit the precedent in case of a boy who has completed his fourteenth year, but he will decide that as Perumal is by his own admission not quite fourteen, he is yours for the present."

The next morning, however, at daybreak, the vakeel spoke in another strain. Said he: "This Waltham despairs of gaining the pending case, but thinks he has another and a stronger hold upon you. The moment our collector gives the boy to you, Waltham will have you arrested for perjury. I saw mischief in his eye while you testified that the boy was not thirteen; so, on leaving the cutcherry, I had him watched and followed. He was going to Illathapet for witnesses before, but on leaving court he meant to go there for a stronger reason. He went for legal advice as to the proper way of proceeding in a case of perjury."

"Well," said Ramasamy, "only tell me how

many witnesses he will bring, and mine shall outnumber them."

"You speak like a fool," said the vakeel. "Do you suppose Waltham will buy up witnesses, like a Hindu? No, he will bring only those who positively know the things they swear to. Now, my messenger heard him say that some one at Periacoil, standing within the garden-wall, listened while you talked with Perumal about his being old enough to marry. This person, whose name my messenger could not gather, will swear that you then claimed to the boy's face that he was within one month of being fourteen. Now, can you tell who this person was?"

Ramasamy mused: "There was some one who called to Perumal, and who slammed the gate as soon as the boy ran through. From the glimpse I had of his figure and dress, I should say he was a pariah servant. His face I did not see. He may have been listening, perhaps."

"You should have told me this before," said the vakeel.

"I have always admitted the boy's real age to you," said Ramasamy.

"Yes, yes," said the vakeel, "but you did not say you had recently admitted it to the boy himself, at a time when your words might have been overheard."

"You yourself agreed that it was best to have the boy under thirteen," said Ramasamy to his adviser.

"True, true," said the vakeel. "It seemed best to add a whole year to the lacking month, for the assistance of our worthy collector, who is so harassed by this Waltham. Strange that he fears him so!"

The vakeel was not aware "how awful goodness is."

"You think, now, that he will decide in my favor, in spite of the boy's oath that he lacks but a month of fourteen. It is a pity you did not have me swear to the same thing, so as to avoid this new danger. I was willing to be guided by you, who boasted of knowing the English so well," said Ramasamy, bitterly.

"What! are you insolent, you dog of a Sudra?" said the Brahmin vakeel.

"Sudras are no dogs since the English became masters here," was the defiant answer.

The fair-hued Brahmin vakeel grew nearly black in the face. "That will not help you," said he, "if these same English convict you of perjury, and sentence you to work on the roads in a chain-gang seven years."

Ramasamy now recoiled. "Oh!" he whined, "you will not let them put me on the roads! I pay you a monstrous fee!"

"Well," said the Brahmin, "restrain your insolence if you want my aid. The question is, will you make off to some safe place, leaving the boy, or will you stay and risk a trial for perjury?"

Ramasamy mused. If he could make up his mind to run away, leaving Perumal behind, his own safety was nearly certain, since Waltham doubtless was preferring the charge of perjury against him merely as a means of saving Perumal from his clutches. But to leave the boy

and go home with the disappointment of having the rich marriage broken off, augmented by the disgrace brought on his caste by Perumal's eating with a pariah horsekeeper and being baptized a Christian! No! he must not sit quiet under these indignities. And so he suggested that some plan might yet be formed for decoying the boy away from English protection.

But the vakeel had already caused his minions to sound the boy, and had found him far too shrewd to run away from an English protector, even were that protector no other than Beaumont himself. Nor must any attempt be made at present to bribe the guards and seize the boy, for Mr. Beaumont's honor was staked upon producing him in cutcherry next morning, and such a deed of violence would compel the collector, whose sympathies were now with Ramasamy, to become his open and efficient opponent.

Ramasamy then wondered what would be his risk in standing a trial for perjury.

"If this Waltham can prove that in conversing with the boy you asserted his age to be nearly

fourteen, then I can see but one line of defence," said the vakeel. "It is this—you are not guilty of perjury in the cutcherry, but only of lying at Periacoil."

"Oh yes, I see, I see!" cried Ramasamy; "that will do very well. Yes, I was lying at Periacoil when I called the boy nearly fourteen. I lied in order to coax him home. But yesterday, being put upon oath, my religious scruples forced me to confess that he was not quite thirteen. Yes, that defence will be very good. Why not?"

For the vakeel was looking doubtful: "You have given different accounts at different times, while the boy, it is likely, has always told the same story. Not even his great danger yesterday could make him swerve from the truth. Then, too, his physical and mental development will give the lie to your statement. Besides, this Waltham will demand to see the horoscope cast by the astrologers at the boy's birth; and if you could impose a forged horoscope on Waltham, you cannot on his counsel. And your

scores of witnesses will count for nothing with those who know the Hindus. No, I should not advise you to risk a trial for perjury."

Ramasamy's countenance fell. But the vakeel now suggested a plan by which Ramasamy might secure his own safety without losing his hold on Perumal. The outlines were these :

Ramasamy must seek an interview with Perumal, and inform him that Waltham purposed to prosecute him for perjury and to have Perumal detained as a witness. He must confess his danger of being convicted, and must entreat the boy to withdraw his statement as to his age, if he would be spared the humiliation of seeing his uncle chained among felons. Of course the boy would decline belying himself, but Ramasamy's information would put him into a frame of mind which would make him a more easy prey to the plot. When the case for the guardianship of Perumal should be opened next morning, the vakeel must so skillfully manipulate matters that Perumal would be brought into the position of a mere witness, and, as such, excluded from

listening to the evidence of others. Waltham might demand that he be guarded in the witness-room, but all possible guards must be bribed in advance. At this time Perumal could be lured to some little distance by a pretended summons to act as witness on the new charge of perjury, which would be tried at Illathapet. Since he might, after all, doubt or hesitate, almost at the same moment a hue and cry must be raised in another direction that Perumal was voluntarily running away from Mr. Beaumont's jurisdiction. The vakeel knew a boy of Perumal's size and figure, who might be discovered running from the catcherry, pursued by natives in the secret, and who, on being caught, should declare that he was but following the real fugitive, who was still in advance. This would give the affair a coloring which, the vakeel trusted, might not be deemed by Mr. Beaumont to touch his honor. And lastly, in the midst of this confusion, Ramasamy must quietly disappear.

This plot, clumsy as it seemed, met next day with success so far as concerned the abduction

of Perumal and the escape of his uncle, but it failed to blind any English eyes as to its real character. To Mr. Beaumont and Captain Waltham alike it was, after the first surprise, a transparent Hindu trick. Neither one believed that Perumal had fled of his own accord. And under the circumstances even Mr. Beaumont was forced to regret that a false alarm in the wrong direction had prevented his searching for Perumal in the witness-room till the critical moment was past. It left him with the damaging notoriety of having a retinue of officials so corrupt that they dared attempt such an abduction under his very eyes. And considering who and what Mr. Beaumont was, it is doubtful whether he could expect anything better at the hands of a people whose heathenism he so carefully cherished and conserved, defended and confirmed.



CHAPTER XVI.

THE abduction of Perumal only strengthened Waltham's determination to rescue the boy from his uncle. But his work could not be neglected ; so, after spending a night and a day at Illathapet, to set matters in train for looking up the missing parties, independently of such efforts as Beaumont might feel obliged to make, Waltham returned to Periacoil.

The hot season was passing away, but Mrs. Ryland's health was failing so rapidly that her husband, in deep concern, sent her and the babe to Illathapet, which was the nearest station where medical advice could be obtained.

Mr. Stanley was expecting his promotion very shortly, and on this event he and his family were to visit England. As Mrs. Ryland's

health seemed to require a decided change, the doctor ordered a sea-voyage in her case, and she was to sail with the Stanleys.

At first she had been staying with the Beverlys but Mrs. Stanley had very soon called to take her away. "You know, my dear Mrs. Beverly," she said, "that I can at once surround poor Mrs. Ryland with many comforts that are beyond your reach. Besides, I think you are too near the native town. I mentioned my idea to Dr. Hart this morning, and he was delighted with it."

But notwithstanding all the kindness of these noble-hearted Christian friends, Mrs. Ryland had continued to fail, though so gradually that even the doctor had scarcely been able to mark the commencement of the low, nervous fever now fastened upon her. Mr. Ryland had been summoned from the cares of his station, but neither of him nor of her babe did she take much notice, though recognizing them perfectly whenever roused for the purpose from the stupor in which she lay.

There came at last a day when it seemed as if the fever must have burned itself out, though whether, in so doing, it had left more than the ashes of Mrs. Ryland's frame no one dared say. There had been, since noon, one of those rare showers which sometimes fall in Southern India in September, as if in promise of the coming monsoon. The grass looked fresh and green. In place of a hot, dry wind, like furnace blasts, the breeze blew moist and cool at sunset. Dr. Hart suggested opening the doors leading upon the verandah, and wheeling Mrs. Ryland's couch around, so that she might look upon the shaven lawn.

The poor young creature opened her eyes so languidly that no one ventured to address her. At length she said to Mrs. Stanley, who sat beside her couch, "Is Captain Waltham still at Periacoil?"

"He has just ridden in for a night to inquire after you."

"But he goes back again to his work?"

The Captain presenting himself, replied, "My

work there will last me some months longer, but I will ride over here at any time for a few hours, if I can be of service to you."

"Captain," said the young wife, "you know what sorrow is, and you will pity and comfort my poor husband when he goes back alone to his desolate home."

Waltham knew what this meant, but his answer put the topic in another light. "Mr. Ryland will miss you sorely," said he, "yet it will comfort him to think that you are getting your roses again in dear old England."

"Ah, dear old England! But I shall never see it more."

"My dear child," said Mrs. Stanley, "remember that to keep up courage is winning half the battle. Resolve that you can get strength, and your own hope of life will be better than any tonic. Once breathe the sea-air, and you are a changed creature."

"No," said the young wife, "I feel that I must die and leave my husband all alone in this weary country."

"Dear Mrs. Ryland," said Captain Waltham, with a strong effort, "think what your father's joy will be if you can only live to reach home. Should you not like to see him once again?"

"Should I not like to see my father? Oh, Captain, when has a day passed since I left him in his widowed, childless home that I have not longed for a sight of his face? I see him often in my dreams. Oh, if I only close my eyes, I have his face before me. The dear old home! I see it now. The library window is open to admit the gentle September breeze, and close beside the window sits my poor, deserted father. A breath of air just stirs his silver locks. His placid, gentle face has more of patience than of joy. His calm blue eyes gaze through the window—not at the grassy lawn; not at the waving trees: they gaze far, far into the dim distance, what way they lost the fading vision of his daughter's form when she went forth to return no more! My dear old father! Yes, I left you alone, as now I must leave my husband and my little babe. Robert! O Robert!"

As Robert Ryland sank on his knees beside her couch, a look of painful bewilderment settled on her face, and she seemed to wander until she fell asleep.

But on the following morning she woke with her mind clear and strong.

"Robert," she said, "I have looked beyond, beyond the veil. Oh, the things that we see here are so unreal! The things beyond so sure! All my past griefs and perplexities seem such utter trifles that I blush to think they moved me so. And you, dearest, when you miss me sorely—for we have been so much to each other, dearest, so much!—when you miss me sorely, look beyond the veil, as I do now! *There, THERE!*" and she was gone.





CHAPTER XVII.

IN returning to his desolate home, Mr. Ryland had left his babe for a time with Mrs. Stanley, who had begged the privilege of giving it a mother's care. "And yet," thought he, "I cannot now fulfill my purpose of sending my child to England. She shall comfort me a few years longer for her mother's loss. When the Stanleys leave, Mrs. Beverly will gladly give her all needful love and care."

At this time Mr. Ryland derived from Captain Waltham's presence in Periacoil all that consolation his dying wife had foreseen. Three years the sun of India had shone on Laura Waltham's grave, and her husband's heart was yet un comforted.

One day, as the two friends, now drawn closer together by the similarity of their sorrows, were

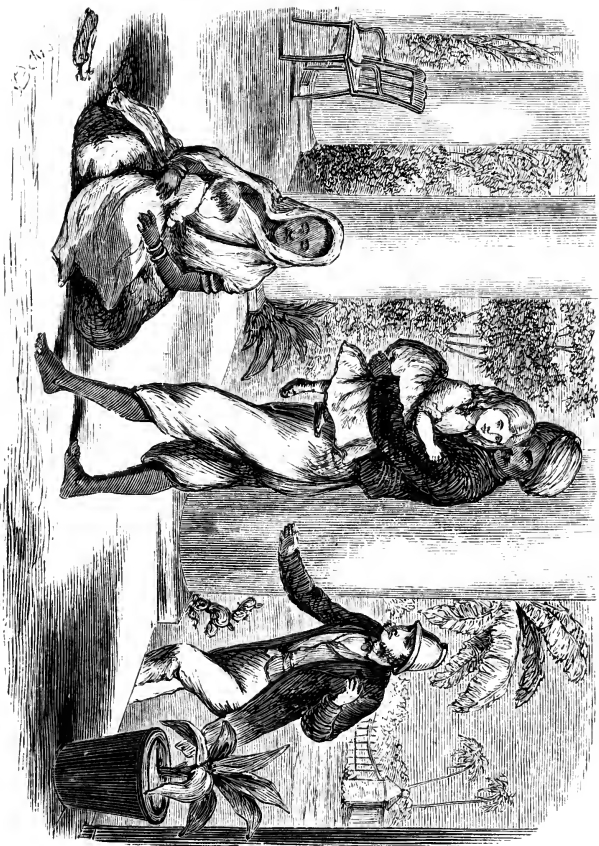
sitting in quiet talk at their early dinner, a special coolie from Mrs. Stanley brought in a note for Mr. Ryland. Its substance was this : Mr. Stanley was already free to leave Illathapet. Mrs. Stanley wished to continue her care over the motherless babe until she could place it with its maternal grandfather in England, and hoped that the suddenness of the notice might not find Mr. Ryland unequal to the trial of parting from the child for its own good. Would he ride over when the sun was low enough ? A pony was posted for him halfway.

With a quivering lip Robert Ryland gave the orders necessary for his departure. All the way to Illathapet a dreadful struggle went on within his breast. He knew it would be for the child's good that it should go home at once. Yet he longed to keep it near him for a few years more, that he might see it now and then. Thus longing he alighted under Mr. Stanley's porte-cochère.

He had ridden so rapidly that it was not yet dark. His child and Mrs. Stanley's were on the

verandah, having just returned from their evening airing. His baby was in the arms of a native nurse, or ayah, while Mrs. Stanley's little Kate was carried by her own favorite bearer.

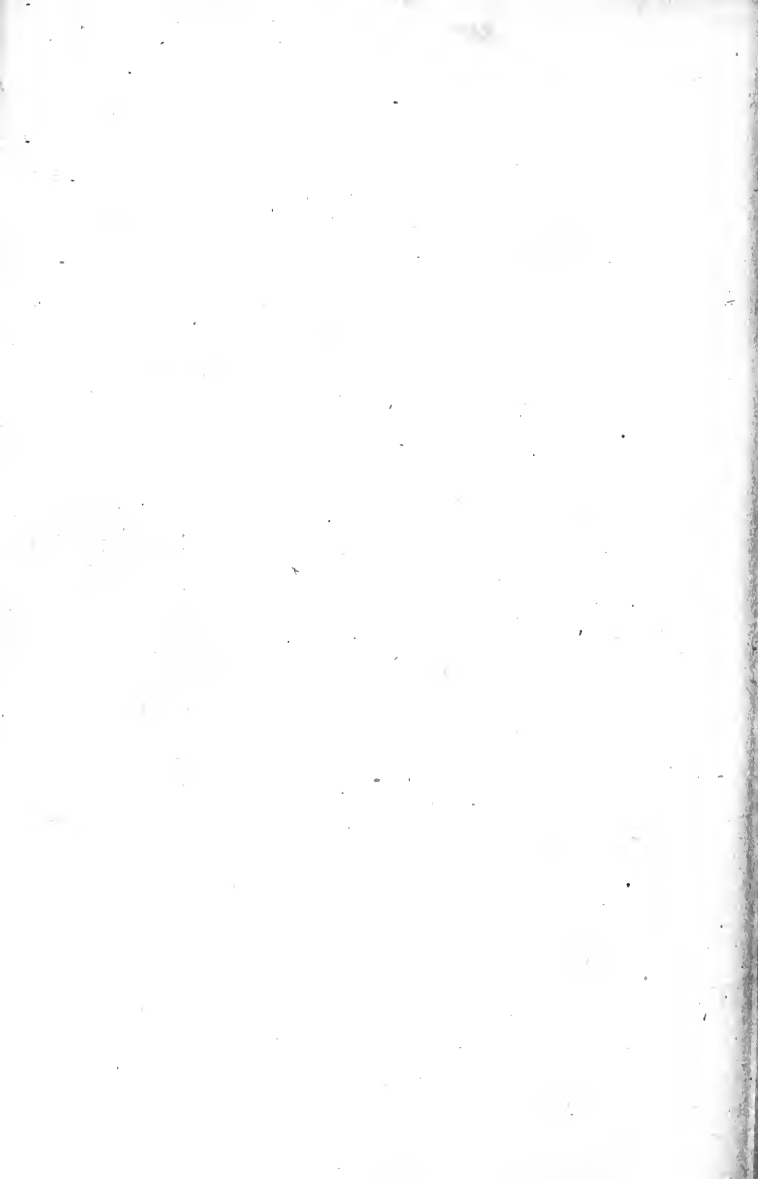
Many an Indian civilian maintains a retinue nearly equal to that of an English nobleman. The Stanleys affected no special pomp or state. They had merely enlarged and improved their style of living by degrees, as Mr. Stanley's name rose higher and higher on the civil list, and now their establishment was much like that of any other Anglo-Indian of equal rank. They had a butler and mates; a cook and his staff; a head ayah and other women; a head gardener and under gardeners; a coachman with horse-keepers and grasscutters, besides punka-pullers, palanquin-bearers, and what not—in all, from twenty to thirty persons. As most of these servants were married people, living on Mr. Stanley's premises, you might see a row of neat little native houses at one end of the compound. In many of these families there were children, and for these children Mrs. Stanley hired a native



Captain Waltham.

His baby was in the arms of a Native nurse.

Page 194.



teacher. Every day at a certain hour, between breakfast and tiffin, she went to the school-room, and there, in the presence of her servants and their children, she read, in gentle, serious tones, the Church of England's morning prayers in the language of the natives. In hiring servants, she always chose those who, though they might be heathen, were willing to attend prayers. Nor had Mr. Stanley ever objected to her proceedings on the miserable plea of the neutrality policy. Of course, with a timid and time-serving race, Mrs. Stanley knew there would be some who from unworthy motives would affect a regard they did not feel for the religion of their master and mistress ; but others gave her genuine cause for thankfulness to the Power who blessed her efforts for their good. Among these there was one young man whom she had trained up from childhood. He was only the son of a pariah horsekeeper, but there was an integrity stamped on his features and a manliness in his whole bearing which showed how much Christianity can do for those of lowest origin. This was the

man who acted as little Kate's bearer morning and evening.

There could not be a stronger comment on the desirability of sending children home to England than that afforded by little Kate Stanley's appearance. Naturally fair as a lily, with blue eyes and flaxen ringlets, her delicate complexion was now, from her Indian birth and rearing, perfectly bloodless and waxen. But for this she would have been a beautiful child. Even as it was, her loveliness compelled admiration, and she was a sight for the eye to rest on as she sat aloft in Paul's steady clasp, one little arm thrown trustfully about his neck, while her flaxen curls brushed the intensely black and shining cheek of his honest, manly face.

But these things were not noted by Robert Ryland as he sprang up the steps and clasped his baby to his bosom. It was "Oh, my child! my child! Can I let you grow up apart from your only living parent, ignorant of his very form and features? Can I let others daily receive the caressing embraces for which I pine

in vain? My baby! Oh, my motherless darling!"

This agonizing struggle kept him silent all the evening. Once, when the children were about being taken to bed, he roused himself to attempt a few words with little Kate Stanley. He even forced a smile while saying to her mother, "This little maiden has never spoken a word of English to me. When I first saw her I tried to persuade her that as I was new to India she might indulge me with the sound of my own language; but she burst forth indignantly: 'How can I talk English? They feed me congee, plain, thin mulligatawny and pish-pash. Let them give me good roast beef, and then I will talk English.'"

The parents laughed, "Her ayah and her amah taught her that speech," said Mrs. Stanley.

"I speak English now," observed Miss Katie.

"Ah, why so? You get no roast beef, I dare say? A little girl of five is too young for that."

"I am going home, where they understand only English."

“And are you glad to go home?”

“Oh yes! England is better than India, and heaven is better than England,” said little Kate.

At this unlooked-for answer, Robert Ryland involuntarily started, but, wondering at his own emotion, he kissed the child and sent her away. Then, having passionately bade his own baby good-night, his features settled back once more into an expression of perplexed distress. He carried the sorrow to his couch, and wrestled with it on a sleepless pillow far on toward the dawn, when he slept but to find it the one agony of his dream, until a sweet calm fell on him as he seemed to hear the voice of his buried wife softly asking, “But cannot you spare her to *me*, dear Robert?”

He started and sat up. Mr. Stanley, in his dressing-gown and with his night-lamp, stood at the bedside.

“Ah!” with a long sigh like a sob, said Robert Ryland, “I will be ready instantly.”

“Who has spoken with you? For I surely

found you sleeping, and merely called your name," said Mr. Stanley.

"There was no need that any one should speak. I feel that something ails my child."

Mr. Stanley gravely admitted that the babe was ill. Mr. Ryland, now ready, followed him to the children's room, where, in Mrs. Stanley's arms, lay the little motherless one.

"It is cholera!" said Robert Ryland.

"The doctor will be here immediately," said Mrs. Stanley, resigning her chair and her unconscious little charge to Mr. Ryland. "Baby was in usual health at bed-time, and ayah woke me at the first symptoms, so that no time has been lost."

"Quite true, no time has been lost," said Mr. Ryland. "But yet it is too late. This is the sudden, unheralded type of cholera. Had the doctor been here at baby's first waking, there could have been no help. Oh, *my child!*" (and there was a wail of anguish in the word), "I give you up to your mother, darling! Only to your mother!"

“And to the tender Shepherd of the little lambs,” said Mr. Stanley, laying his hand on Ryland’s shoulder. That sympathizing touch, that solemn, tender voice of gentle Christian admonition, opened the stricken father’s heart, and brought relief.

The doctor came, and had not a word to say. At sunrise Robert Ryland held in his arms a little corpse.

They buried the baby by its fair young mother’s grave, and Robert Ryland returned to his work—a man without a home or kindred in that foreign land.





CHAPTER XVIII.

IT was now the third week in October. The monsoon had burst, and was raging with unusual violence. Trees were torn up by the roots; roads were impassable; every one was shut up at home to such labors and employments as could be carried on within-doors. The rain pitilessly pelted the earth upon the graves where lay all that bound the hearts of Waltham and Ryland to the soil of India. But it swelled the rivers and lesser streams, it filled the tanks and ponds, and made the poor ryots almost dance for joy. Waltham saw with pleasure that his one season's work upon the yet unfinished anicut* produced some good results, and he felt assured that the next monsoon would,

* *Anicut*—a dam for the collection of water for irrigation.

in all probability, prove beyond cavil the value of his labors.

At length the wind calmed down and the rain abated. November was almost gone, and once more the only pleasant portion of the Indian year had come. Mr. Ryland was now preparing to accompany Mr. Beverly upon a preaching tour of some extent.

“And where is your moonshee going to spend his time during your absence?” asked Waltham.

“Oh, he remains here; that is, at his own house in the village. He makes a little during my absence by teaching the Hindu classics to several young natives.”

“Do you think he would be willing to go with me for a few weeks?” asked Waltham.

“For I must be off with my tents very soon.”

“I think he would go with you,” said Ryland. “But how is it that you are hiring a moonshee just now? I thought you were perfectly contented with your present knowledge of the language.”

“Ah, but,” said the Captain, “my ideas have

been enlarging ever since I knew Perumal, or Daniel, if I can learn his Christian name—poor boy! But, now I think of it, why cannot I still call him Perumal? Daniel Perumal would be his name, you know. Why does not that sound as well as John Devasagayam, the name of the converted native whom Bishop Corrie admitted to priest's orders in Tinnevely?"

"*Devasagayam* is a name bearing a very beautiful Christian signification," replied Ryland. "'*God's aid*,' you observe."

"Well, then look at those fine young natives in Madras, the Reverend P. Rajahgopaul, the Reverend A. Vencataramiah, the Reverend S. Ettirajooloo, who have received Presbyterian ordination from the Scotch missionaries. How much better to retain their own musical Hindu names than to disguise their nationality by such English appellations as John Smith, James Brown, Peter Jones!"

Mr. Ryland laughed. "Besides," continued the Captain, "I cannot see that the name 'Perumal' has anything *essentially* heathenish in

its composition. I have heard that it is applied to one of the gods, but have always thought it was so applied merely as signifying 'a great personage,' which I suppose is the literal rendering of the term."

Ryland rejoined: "If you like, I can ask Mr. Beverly's opinion as to the propriety of retaining the name and calling the boy 'Daniel Perumal.' Were the name 'Mootooswamy,' or 'Chinnasamy,' or 'Ramasamy,' or any other samy,* I should object to it as intrinsically heathenish. But that of 'Perumal' perhaps may pass unchallenged."

The moonshee, our tall friend Mahremuttu, readily engaged to make the tour on the terms offered by Waltham. And so the Captain's bullock-bandy, his luggage-carts, his saddle-horse, his tents, his Lascars, his domestic servants, his moonshee, and he himself, a train of a dozen people and much luggage, set forth for some of the arid regions a little farther removed from English stations.

* Samy—*lord*, a title given to the gods of India.

Waltham had explored and investigated for a few weeks, and had discovered certain delightful possibilities in the way of irrigation, when he became aware that a newly-conceived idea which he desired to suggest to government would receive a more perfect development if he could previously arrive at a cordial understanding on the subject with a certain native of rank, whose jaghire* lay close at hand. Accordingly, he sent a polite message to the effect that he would in person wait upon his Highness that very evening. Near sunset he mounted his horse and rode gayly out over the four miles of unfenced country lying between his encampment and the jaghiredar's little "city." He passed, on his way, a Brahmin village lying quietly among the fields which formed a part of the jaghire. Even these rustic Brahmins had the undeniable air of birth and culture which distinguishes their caste from other Hindus. Two of them, sitting cross-legged on an open porch in front of a cottage, were absorbed in playing chess—that wonderful

* Domains.

amusement said to have had a Brahmin for its inventor, in the ancient days when the favorites of Oriental princes must rack their brains to some purpose for the diversion of their royal patrons.

But Waltham merely glanced at these chess-players without checking his horse as he passed, and soon he was within the "city" and at the palace-gates. Here he was received by the highest officers of the household, while the jaghiredar himself (or Rajah, as he was styled by courtesy) met him in the square, open courtyard, within the quadrangle of buildings forming the palace.

The audience was to be given upon the verandah ascending by a few steps from the open court. Here chairs and a table had been placed, out of regard for the English habits of the present visitor. Waltham was at once shown to a seat, exchanging, meanwhile, a courteous word with his host. The Rajah was a youth of eighteen, a Mahratta Brahmin, though his jaghire lay so far from the Mahratta country.

His features were strictly Caucasian, like those of all Brahmins. The general expression of his face was haughty as the haughtiest, but its special character was perhaps less intellectual than is usual with his caste, owing to his greater freedom in the indulgence of bodily appetites. He presently rose, and taking a garland of jasmynes from the table, hung it about Waltham's neck, after which he took up a silver flask with a perforated stopper and sprinkled rose-water all over the Captain's clothes. This piece of Hindu etiquette being duly performed, the Rajah resumed his seat. Waltham, of course, endured all with exemplary calmness, and though always feeling silly when called on to submit to these begarlandings and besprinklings, he did not venture to remove his fragrant white necklace while in the Rajah's presence. But now it was necessary to open his business, which he did by explaining certain diagrams and statistics illustrating his idea. Though the Rajah's own language was Mahratta and the Captain's English, yet they readily talked to-

gether by using the vernacular of that region. The Rajah invariably referred to himself by the pronouns "We," "Our" and "Us." And certainly he felt his right to the use of the plural, and stood upon his dignity far more emphatically than does Her Majesty of England in those state papers wherein she styles herself "WE VICTORIA."

The conference ended amicably, and the Captain took his leave. While remounting his horse he said to the attendants, "On which side does the river run?"

As the proper road was pointed out, certain bystanders exchanged expressive glances. That road, after crossing the river, led to the nearest Sudra village, and there poor Perumal was secreted. But of this the Captain was totally unsuspecting. However, as he pursued his quiet course, he became aware of the gradual gathering of a rabble of boys at his horse's heels, and saw that as he quickened his pace the boys quickened theirs. Presently shouts arose, and the Captain's dignity took alarm. Quick in planning and

executing, he wheeled about and charged down the street. The rabble divided right and left, but closed in behind and pursued him back to the city. He made straight for the Rajah's gate. By this time the hubbub was considerable, and the Rajah's own uncle came down to see what had happened.

"I thought Brahmin courtesy was such as to secure a solitary and harmless Englishman from being hooted at and chased through the streets," said the indignant Waltham. "It may be that I have, unwittingly, passed through some of the more private streets, or that I have inadvertently given some other offence to the inhabitants. But I trust that the boys of this Brahmin city may hereafter choose some more polite way of informing a stranger of his mistake." Having uttered these words, Waltham paused for breath.

The Rajah's uncle was profuse in apologies, which were received with cool incredulity. The boys *might* indeed have followed and shouted in mere childish admiration of the unusual spectacle of an Englishman, but Waltham thought

that shouts of simple wonder would have had another tone from those which he called "hoots." However, keeping his doubts unspoken, he asked with cool civility whether there could really be any objection to his pursuing the route he had attempted.

With plenty of assurances that the Captain's presence was in every street as welcome as dew to flowers, it was still suggested that an escort of some dignity should be furnished in proof that no insult had been intended or would be allowed. To this Waltham assented, simply to show that he would not prolong a quarrel. He noticed that they conducted him by the same route he had previously taken, and this gave him the more difficulty in accounting for the behavior of the boys. He made some little pause at the riverside, after which it was proposed that, when his observations were completed, he should return with the same escort to the Rajah's city.

"But if I cross here," said Waltham, "a little turn will bring me round to my own encampment; and so, salaam." And without waiting a

reply, he spurred his horse and forded the very shallow stream.

He noticed some hubbub in a village just ahead. Also, in passing the streets, his ear caught a muffled cry. But how could he guess that Ramasamy, within, was choking down poor Perumal's glad shout at seeing him pass the window? How fancy that in the supposed character of Perumal's champion he had earned the insult from Brahmin boys, who yet cared for all Sudras only as for a footstool the English were quietly removing from beneath Brahminic feet? And so the unconscious Waltham never once drew rein until he reached his own tent.

Almost immediately on his return he received notice of a proposed visit from the anxious jaghiredar, who dreaded to offend the English in the person of an official. And so next morning there came an imposing procession headed by tom-toms and other instruments, making sounds melodious to Hindu ears. There were horsemen and footmen—a very great company. There was the elephant, duly caparisoned and bearing his

howdah, but the Rajah was not within the howdah, having preferred to ride his ambling pony.—And the Rajah's robes of crimson satin were gorgeous with inwoven threads of gold. And the Rajah's brother was there, a young prince of fifteen years, whose beautiful and finely-chiseled features were not injured by obesity, like those of his elder brother. And the Rajah's uncle was there, a wiry and wizened and wicked old Brahmin, of whose morals the less we say the better. And there was much flourish of trumpets, and much ceremony, and much of the Rajah's awful yet condescending "WE," till finally the elephant, and the tom-toms, and the footmen, and the horsemen, and the Rajah's wicked old uncle, and the Rajah's handsome young brother, and the Rajah himself, in his robes of gold and crimson, and with his awful "WE," having displayed themselves and created a sensation to the utmost stretch of their ability, set off once more, leaving the Captain and his tents in peace.



CHAPTER XIX.

WHEN the jaghiredar's train had departed, Waltham looked at his watch, and wondered to find that his moonshee was not in waiting. But presently Mahremuttu arrived, entering with a less leisurely air than usual, and having, in fact, so little of his customary dignified serenity, that Waltham was prepared to hear uncommon tidings. "Sir," said the moonshee, "the news I bring will excuse my want of punctuality. The boy Perumal has for some time been secreted in a small Sudra village of this jaghire. Yesterday evening his uncle, hearing of your arrival, thought verily you had come to demand of the jaghiredar his rendition to the English authorities. Scarcely waiting for nightfall, he set off for some other place, taking the boy along. I have been occupied

this morning in gradually gaining such information as I could gather without exciting the suspicion of those who might possibly know me as your moonshee."

"Which way did they go?" cried Waltham. "I will have the peons out with the least possible delay."

"Sir," said the moonshee, "if you will pardon my boldness. I would suggest another course."

"Well?"

"Sir, it would consume more time than we can spare to communicate with the English authorities from this remote place. And it seems that Ramasamy came to the jaghiredar's dominions under the supposition that, even were he traced hither, the formalities necessitated by the courtesy observed between the Honorable Company and any native ruler, even of a small jaghire, would consume time enough to permit his escape. And having now left this refuge, he will keep quite clear of the whole district of Illathapet. Whether correctly or not, he believes that the magistrates of his own district

cannot seize him without previous formalities between themselves and the magistrates of the district where he may happen to be."

"If this be so, all the more haste must I make," said Waltham. "So tell me, pray, which way he has gone!"

"Sir," said the moonshee, "though I gathered some hints as to his destination, yet I cannot judge how wide a sweep he may make in avoiding his own collectorate. He will certainly pass from district to district until he gains the territories of his Highness, the Rajah of Mysore."

"Then I should send word to the English Residency," said Waltham.

"Sir, once within the vast kingdom of Mysore he will not so easily be found."

"I am in doubt whether or not you wish he *should* be found," said the perplexed Waltham, with some irritation.

Mahremuttu, with unruffled serenity, returned, "Sir, I was under the impression that you yourself, though convinced of Ramasamy's perjury,

yet sought his apprehension merely as a means of getting Perumal out of his clutches."

"You are right," said Waltham in a calmer tone. "And if you would aid me by any information to devise another plan for Perumal's escape, I care but little whether Ramasamy be brought to justice."

"If it be so," returned Mahremuttu, "I will cheerfully aid by any means within my power. To cause the apprehension of Ramasamy might compromise me with my friends; but I have thought of a way in which I may aid Perumal's escape without damaging my own social standing."

"How can I thank you?" cried Waltham.

"Sir," said the moonshee, "I need no thanks for rendering so slight a service to my generous employer."

"But you propose to do that for which Perumal will thank you for ever!"

"Sir, Perumal is a bright, shrewd lad. It is a pleasure to befriend him."

The Captain recalled the first meeting between

Mahremuttu and Perumal, smiling as he thought of the cactus cushion. "What do you know of the boy's shrewdness?" said he.

"Oh," said the moonshee, "it was he who stopped a long argument wherewith you and I were hindering his repose, the day he came to you in Periacoil."

"Aha!" said Waltham. "And so you knew the trick he played you, and now propose to return it by a kindness?"

"Sir, the boy meant no harm, and we have always been good friends."

Waltham, now almost convinced of Mahremuttu's sincerity, gazed on him with growing regard.

"You do not forget," said he, "that you are helping the boy to shake off his religion—your religion?"

"*I do not forget it,*" said the moonshee, solemnly.

There was a moment's pause while Hindu and Briton gazed into each other's eyes.

"Mahremuttu," said the Captain, "I am sure

you feel the truth of Christianity. Let me help you in breaking away from your false gods, as you are helping Perumal."

"It is not that I care for my lying gods," said the moonshee.

"What then?"

"*I cannot break my caste,*" said Mahremuttu, with a groan. "But with Perumal it's different. Since he has had the courage once to break away, let us aid him in standing firmly by his new faith."

"But, Mahremuttu, this is a question, not for time alone, but for a long, long eternity."

With a desperate effort Mahremuttu thrust thought aside, and reverted to Perumal's case. As he detailed the plan he had formed, calling for the co-operation of the Eurasian servant Billy, Waltham interrupted by saying,

"But, Mahremuttu, justice should go boldly forth to gain her righteous ends. She should not sneak like a thief in the dark. I prefer sending police-peons, openly."

"But," said Mahremuttu. "do police-peons

invariably succeed without recourse to strata-gem? Let justice flourish like a fair and goodly tree, but it has my free leave to grow and spread not only in the glare of sunshine, but also in the hush of darkest night."

"Well, then," said Waltham, "if I first let you follow up the track, and gain the clue as you propose, why cannot I send peons to such place as you may specify in writing?"

"I will welcome help from peons of the right sort," said Mahremuttu. "But you have yourself expressed doubts of the entire police force of the whole district of Illathapet. You think it a mystery that Ramasamy has for so long a time eluded them. I can give you the key. Ramasamy's vakeel finds means to throw them off the scent; and this he does, not alone for the sake of his client's fees, but because Perumal, once caught, might by his testimony bring home the guilt of his abduction not only to his uncle, but to his uncle's vakeel."

"True," said Waltham. "And that abduction is a crime which Mr. Beaumont's honor

forces him to clear up and punish. But observe, Mahremuttu, I propose calling in aid from the police force of the district which you may point out as Ramasamy's temporary refuge. And since time is precious, I will, with great privacy, have Billy put upon the police force before he joins you."

"There is yet one point," said Mahremuttu. "If you at this time attempt nothing beyond getting possession of Perumal, our success will be more probable."

"I am willing," said the Captain, "to delay sending a summons for Ramasamy, on the ground that much valuable time will be saved by gaining your co-operation. And I see plainly, Mahremuttu, that though you are willing to incur such reproach as may fall on you for abetting Perumal's escape, yet you shrink from offending your people by helping to bring Ramasamy to justice."

"I confess it," said Mahremuttu. "And as for tricks and stratagems, which you seem to scorn, I expect to go in my own proper charac-

ter, and to say nothing untrue. As for the measures Billy may choose, I leave that between yourself and him."

"Ah! *Billy!*" said Waltham, with a shrug. "I confess though he has acquired a conscience about lying, yet tricks and manœuvres are as dear to him as the air he breathes."





CHAPTER XX.

PERUMAL'S life had been a sad one since the day he fell into his uncle's clutches. On the night after his abduction his supper had been light. At first he had thought grief was in the way of his appetite, but afterward, realizing that his mess of curry actually had a strong and bitter taste, he had suspected the presence of opium, and had quietly thrown away several handfuls without detection. But, little as he had eaten, his meal had been succeeded by a long, deep slumber. On waking, he had found himself in a perfectly strange place. He could not induce any one to tell him how far he was from his own village, or how he had been brought. His first attempt at running away had been punished by the chaining of his ankle to a heavy log. After months of suspense,

he had accidentally seen Captain Waltham passing his cottage prison, but his joyful exclamation had procured him a temporary gagging, followed up by a hasty night-journey. He had been lifted into a bullock-cart by his uncle, while a servant hoisted in the log to which his ankle was chained.

The night's journey had tired him so, that when they halted before sunrise—Ramasamy wishing to hide away during the daylight—he gladly ate some breakfast and fell asleep. Toward dark, he woke, refreshed. As he journeyed on during the second night, he fell to wondering, as he had often done, what his uncle meant to do with him. As yet, he was a social outcast. No one held intercourse with him, and he ate, of course, by himself. Did they ever mean to restore his caste? How could they without his consent? Then he thought of his English friends, and wondered why they did not track him. Since gaining the glimpse of Waltham's face his hopes had been stronger. He looked behind every hedge, longing to see a peon

spring out and seize his perjured uncle. Thus all night long he hoped and watched in perfect wakefulness till dawn of day. Ramasamy now thought he might venture to continue boldly on the highway in the broad daylight; he therefore kept on till the sun was two hours high. After eating breakfast they slept only till midday was past, and then having made a short evening stage, they cooked and ate their supper, and lay down for the night, spreading their mats in the open verandah of a travelers' rest-house.

At dawn, Perumal was aroused from sleep. Sitting up with a cautious movement, he looked and listened. After several minutes, during which Ramasamy's continued snoring was the one sound audible, Perumal's eye was fixed by the cautious signals of a man peering around the corner of the rest-house. It was Mahremuttu. Perumal's start of recognition caused his chain to clank so loudly that Ramasamy, yawning, sat up, and declared it was time to eat and set off. All day they went forward, save a three hours' rest while the heat was

greatest. Perumal gazed on every side for some glimpse of the moonshee. Now they passed a little temple, whose grounds were adorned by images of sacred bulls made of pottery-ware. The bulls were venerable in years, and their legs, like the piety of their worshipers, were gone to decay. Evidently this district had no Beaumont to fan and feed the dying spark of Hindu superstition. Some of the pottery bulls had fallen over altogether, and showed themselves the empty, hollow, brittle things they were. Perumal tried to fancy the moonshee's head protruding stealthily from the huge cavities, like a tortoise's from its shell. Again they passed a reeking oil-mill, whose odors might have told a blind man that the castor-bean was being ground. The weary tramp, tramp of the oxen, treading their monotonous round, and the discordant shrieking of the crazy mill, seemed to Perumal's anxious mind a cruel device for drowning the moonshee's voice. Again a solitary traveler was descried, walking so briskly that he would soon overtake the lumbering cart.

Surely that would be the moonshee or else a peon. But no, it was only a man of the weaver caste, spinning literal street-yarn as he journeyed. Perumal had not heart to admire the man's dexterity in twirling the spindle, tossing it into the air, and just as it fell so low as to nearly touch the ground, recovering it without stooping by a skillful jerk at the now well-twisted thread. Going forward, they passed this weaver's village, where the women were warping a web of native muslin on pegs stuck into the earth in a row beside the hard-trod, well-swept street. No moonshee there. Again, another village, in which, almost under the eaves of a little temple, two women were grinding at a mill, turning the upper millstone round and round upon the nether millstone, and singing as they worked. Again, the road lay under trees, among whose boughs the monkeys capered and chattered, threatening to drop down upon the cart as it passed beneath them. But nothing human shared their abode. Thus everywhere and all day long the boy looked and listened,

until on dismounting from his cart at the rest-house where they were to sleep, he saw Mahremuttu sitting by a little fire, quietly boiling rice for his supper.

By this time Perumal had gained such self-control as to give no token of recognition. Mahremuttu just looked up as the travelers halted, and then went on with his work. Ramasamy seemed to conceive no suspicion, and thus all promised well. A little later, as Perumal sat apart at his solitary supper, he heard footsteps, and felt rather than saw, that Mahremuttu was passing by at no great distance. No one observing, the moonshee walking steadily forward all the time, dropped two small parcels on the side next Perumal. The boy crept forward a step to reach both. One parcel, which was heavy, he instantly hid among his clothes. The other looked like mere tobacco rolled for smoking. Just as Perumal settled back to his food, Ramasamy, looking up, called out, "What is that?" With much trepidation the boy held up the seeming cheroot, and found to his joy

that his uncle asked no farther questions, having himself supplied him with facilities for smoking.

Perumal now began cautiously to unroll his cheroot, with the conviction that some tiny scrap of a letter was folded in with the tobacco-leaf. But no—the thing was simply what it seemed to be, and must have been dropped merely to furnish occasion for conveying the other parcel, which contained, as Perumal had imagined, a little roll of rupees. He kept the wrapper till daylight, when he found traced upon it the direction, “Watch for Billy.”

This missive kept Perumal more than ever on the alert. He gained no further notice from Mahremuttu, who continued on their route throughout the day, though setting forward a little earlier for both the morning and evening stages. At dusk their road led into a well-traveled highway. At the intersection of the roads there was a rest-house. Here they saw several native carts. The bandymen had halted for the night, and were now cooking their rice. Beside each cart stood two bullocks eating straw.

Here and there little fires burned beneath small pots of boiling food. At the nearest fire the crouching bandyman seemed less intent on his cookery than on something he held in his hands. Oh joy! It must surely be a Christian book! This sight gave hope to Perumal, but at the same moment it gave suspicion to his uncle, who asked the bandyman, "Where did you get that book?"

"It was given me by a white man."

"Where? when?" said Ramasamy, in some alarm.

"At a large village on the road, two days ago."

"Oh," said Ramasamy, in a tone of some relief, "and have you encountered any white men on the road since then?"

"No."

However, Ramasamy gave orders that the march should be resumed after supper, and the disappointed boy could only sit and watch the book from a distance. The crouching, bronzed figure of the bandyman, as he read his little book by the yellow, flickering light, formed (with the

murky background) a Rembrandt-like picture which would have fixed an artist's gaze, but Perumal viewed it with sadder eyes.

During the long night, Perumal once more regretted his manacled leg. Were he but free, how swiftly would he run in a single night, over all the miles of space those bandymen with loaded carts had spent two days in traversing! No need of Billy then! But now, as if to aggravate his captive regrets, he heard the little jingling bells of a tappal-runner, who went rushing past as if on winged feet. In those days, throughout the unfrequented districts, many a little post-route had no swifter conveyance than the fleet-footed native runner, who, with the mail-bag slung over his shoulder, on a stick hung with little bells, made good his few miles each hour, with an agility and tirelessness that many of a less indolent race might vainly hope to equal. It is a marvel that among the languid Hindus many classes are found who have trained the muscles used in walking and running till the feats they perform seem almost incredible. It is a

very common thing for palanquin-bearers, if promised extra pay, to go forty miles in a night with their burden on their peculiar gait, half walk, half run. And a native groom will run at the head of a trotting or galloping horse for a distance that amazes the newly-arrived European.

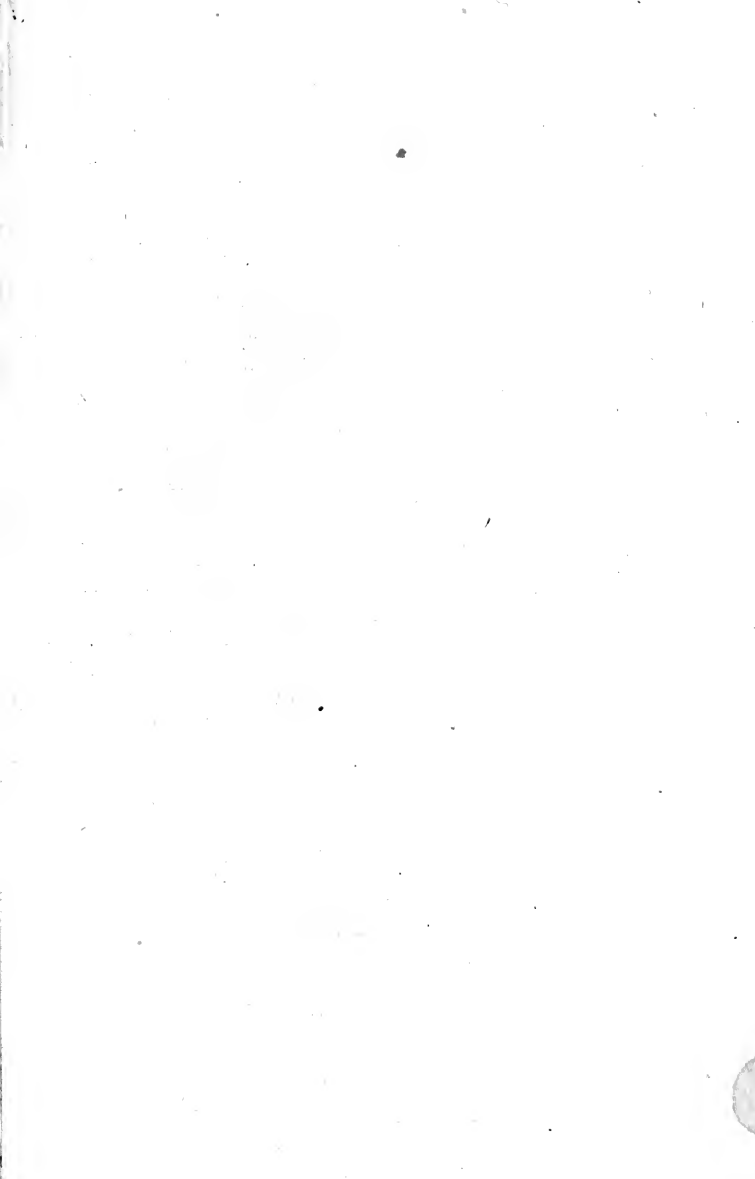
Toward evening of the next day, Ramasamy's party came upon the moonshee sitting (as once before) beside his little pot of boiling rice. This time Ramasamy recognized him as the man who had traveled in their direction, though not always in their company, for the last day or two. With last night's fear upon his mind, he scrutinized the traveler with care, questioning his memory as to whether he had ever seen him before the journey. But while musing he was occupied with certain preparations for supper. Then Perumal, lifting his log in his arms, and hobbling about as if to stretch his legs, ventured near the moonshee and called him by name. "What am I to do?" said he.

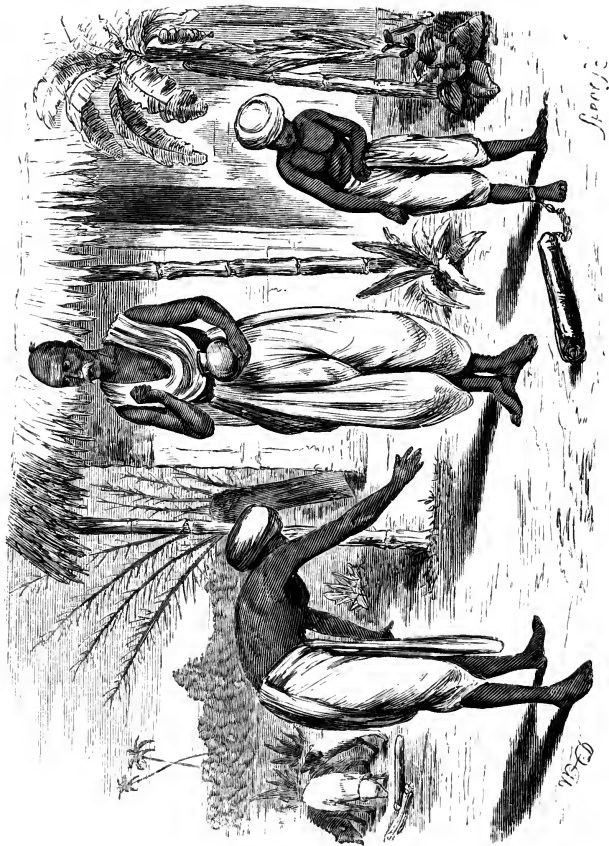
"Can you tell me anything about your uncle's plans? where you are going, and what for?"

“No.”

“Then keep away from me; cannot you see that I am always listening to every word your uncle may drop? If you speak to me, they will suspect us. See! they are looking now.”

As Perumal turned to go the fringe of his mantle swept against the little brass pot of boiling rice. The moonshee started up with a loud cry. “See what it is to talk with a pariah!” quoth he; and next moment the pot of rice went spinning through the air. Its owner, however, found it expedient to follow after, pick it up, and shake out the remaining rice upon the ground. Three half-starved pariah dogs presently scented and flew upon the discarded mess, burning their noses and snarling by turns, while Mahremuttu walked off to scour and rinse and rinse and scour the unfortunate brass vessel. Had it been a potter’s vessel, he would have instantly dashed it in pieces; but caste rules recognize the possibility of purifying, without destroying, any brazen vessel which has been defiled by the accidental touch of one beneath the owner in caste.





Ramasamy's Apology.

Captain Waltham.

Of all this scene Ramasamy had been a witness, and had understood perfectly the part Mahremuttu designed him to understand—namely, his inviolable adherence to caste rules. Ramasamy therefore drew near, offering with many apologies an equivalent of dry rice for a new mess. “And the boy deserves a beating,” said he, with a threatening glance at Perumal.

“Oh,” said Mahremuttu, “what does it signify? A few more pice and a little more trouble. And seeing that the boy has sunk beneath you, I beg you will not defile your hands so far as to strike him.”

Ramasamy stood rebuked by this nicety, and Mahremuttu continued: “I have seen you now and then on the road, and have wondered that you could travel in company with this boy. Surely he is that Perumal who willfully ate with a horsekeeper at Periacoil?”

Ramasamy, aghast, exclaimed: “And who are you? what brings you here?”

“Oh, I am a Moodely of Periacoil, and am going to the Mysore, where my father-in-law

lives. I often saw this boy in my own village, and once I saw you too. Pray why do you not cast off the lad and keep to your own birth-purity?"

"Oh, sir, I do not allow any such intercourse as may contaminate me. But the case is peculiar, and I would like to talk it over with you after we have eaten our suppers."

This was exactly what Mahremuttu Moodely desired, and he went to prepare his food with perfect content.





CHAPTER XXI.

HAVING eaten his supper, Mahremuttu took from a little bag at his girdle a piece of dark-red dried areca nut, and laid it upon a fresh green betel leaf. Then from a tiny box he extracted a small sprinkling of moistened white lime, with which he smeared the nut and leaf, after which he folded all into a little lump and put it between his lips with a relishing smack—as dear a morsel to the Hindu as is tobacco to the chewer of other lands. Presently he was summoned to the proposed conference.

“Sir,” said Ramasamy, when they were nicely seated, “this boy was betrothed to a beautiful girl, whose father would give her a liberal dowry. It is hard to see so rich a bride forfeited.”

“But how can he marry her now?”

“Oh, sir, it may be doubted whether he has ever committed more than a single offence against the rules of caste. You may have observed that, though I will not eat with him, I always supply him with food prepared by my own hands. No pariah has been allowed to cook for him since he came under my care again.”

“But there still remains that one offence unexpiated, and, as it was voluntary, inexpiable, I say.”

“Oh, sir, how can you properly call it voluntary? The boy may be said to have been frantic with terror. The men of my caste living in Periacoil meant kindly, but they drove matters too far. The boy was absolutely beside himself with fear. He was not properly a responsible agent.”

“Many an utterly inadvertent transgression has been deemed for ever inexpiable,” said Mahremuttu, with cold disdain.

Ramasamy sighingly admitted that this was so. “Nevertheless,” said he, “there are not

wanting some few cases where expiation has been accepted and atonement made."

"Well, granting such a possibility, how do you propose to accomplish it?"

"Of course there are painful ceremonies for the restoration of caste," said Ramasamy, "but to these I think the boy might submit could he be brought to realize the beauty of his bride and appreciate the advantage of the match. And as to costly offerings, Perumal might well consent, in view of so rich a match, to spend even the last pice of what his father left him, in order to appease the heads of our caste."

"You speak," said Mahremuttu, "as if this beautiful and wealthy young bride were easily attainable by a needy bridegroom whose means had all been spent in blotting out his foul disgrace."

"Then," said Ramasamy with bitter spite, "let her father sit down under the other disgrace of having upon his hands a marriageable daughter whose betrothal has been canceled, no matter why."

"Ah well," said Mahremuttu, "suppose that in this sad dilemma, her friends should choose as you could wish, must you not furthermore have a willing bridegroom? You might indeed forcibly purify his mouth by blistering his tongue with hot silver; would you also force him to stand up beside his bride and with unwilling hands tie about her neck the marriage emblem?"

Ramasamy groaned, and the other continued: "I conclude he would be an unwilling bridegroom, else why is his leg chained to that heavy log?"

"Ah, sir," said Ramasamy, "I admit that the boy is still unwilling, nor has he ever stooped to feign compliance with a view to being unchained, although he must know that such release would facilitate his much-desired escape. I confess to you that my hopes are almost dead. At first I was confident of success, but through all these months he has resisted every argument, every appeal, and I begin to think I may sooner wear out his very

life than wear out this unconquerable persistence. I had hoped this thing called Christianity was some momentary infatuation, but I find it is something deeper than I can fathom, stronger than I can contend with."

"Then why, in the name of your caste, do you not drop the boy into his chosen pariah herd, and keep to your own birth-purity?"

"Ah," said Ramasamy, "I could have done so months ago, had I been willing, but now I fear the time is past. Perhaps you may know that for the sake of securing the boy I applied to the English authorities, and by so doing incurred the enmity of an Englishman named Waltham. Now you cannot form an idea of that man's revengeful rage and abominable vindictiveness."

Mahremuttu coolly interposed: "I hear he has charged you with perjury."

"Yes; but *how* did you hear?" said Ramasamy in a tone of fresh suspicion.

"Why, the whole bazaar of Periacoil rung with reports of the case," said Mahremuttu.

“And you are now a highly celebrated and much talked-of individual.”

This flattery, so far from soothing Ramasamy, prompted the anxious inquiry, “Can you tell whether they are still searching for me?”

“So it is said,” replied Mahremuttu; “but I have no inkling of police secrets, and do not know whether the peons have gained any traces of you.”

“Could you imagine,” said Ramasamy, “that four days ago this Waltham passed the very house where we then lay hidden? He must be on our track, or what could bring him there?”

This conviction Mahremuttu did not think it his duty to combat, so he said, “If you believe him to be on your track, why not free the boy and make your escape unhampered by him?”

“Oh, sir,” replied Ramasamy, “as I said before, the time for that is past. At first, had I left the boy, this Waltham would perhaps have ceased looking for me; but when he hears I have fettered him now for months, I fear he will think chains are only too good for me.”

Mahremuttu was at this point in some doubt as to what he might say. He could scarcely proclaim his conviction that Ramasamy's safety would be secured by Perumal's release without betraying a suspicious degree of acquaintance with Waltham's sentiments. While he hesitated, Ramasamy went on: "With this boy at large, I cannot go back to my own village. In short, I am now driven to the course of taking him into the Mysore kingdom, and leaving him under restraint in some quiet place for a course of years."

Again Mahremuttu was silent—this time from indignation. Ramasamy continued:

"How far are you going in my direction?"

"You have not mentioned your route," said Mahremuttu.

"This road," said Ramasamy, "will serve my purpose for a few days more. At Colar I learn, it intersects a well-traveled road which is the highway between Madras and Bangalore. But there are so many English travelers passing and repassing, that I shall contrive to enter

Colar during the night, cross the highway, and strike off with the least loss of time upon some obscure road. I am going to the great temple of Krishna."

Mahremuttu carelessly rejoined, "I think the highway may be the better road for me. My father-in-law lives in the direction of Bangalore."

As a result of this conversation, the moonshee lingered behind Ramasamy's party, and even retraced his steps a few miles to a little tappal-station (post-office) they had recently passed. Here he wrote in his own language (not being equal to English composition or familiar with the English epistolary style) this letter :

"To the footstool of the honorable gentleman Captain Waltham, who is brave as a lion yet gentle as a lamb, who frowns on the wicked and smiles on the good, his devoted servant, Mahremuttu, with a thousand salaams, sendeth tidings :

"By the grace of God, and your distinguished protection, I have reached in safety the place from which I write.

“Having encountered a friend upon the road and imparted to his wants, I have already expended my means. If therefore thou couldst of thy great bounty advance me one month’s wages, sending to me at Colar within one week by the hand of the messenger I named, thy goodness will prevent my journey from proving a failure.

“Thus writeth thy unworthy servant, MAHRE-MUTTU MOODELY.”

This letter he sealed with great care, and directed it, in the vernacular, “To the very honorable gentleman, the Engineer Captain Waltham, at Illathapet, this is to be given.”

This direction was in accordance with Waltham’s own arrangement. “Remember,” he had said, “within one week I expect to be in Illathapet, where I shall remain a fortnight, or until I receive leave of absence to visit Madras.”

The moonshee’s missive was carried into Illathapet in the mail-bag upon a certain morning when Waltham, in his own domestic headquarters once more, was entertaining Mr. Beverly

at breakfast. "The tappal-peon is late to-day," said he, observing, as he took his seat, that no letters lay beside his plate.

"The home steamer was due yesterday," suggested Mr. Beverly. "Perhaps there are English letters being sorted for delivery with the usual morning mail."

"But 'tis an *inland* letter I am eager for," said Waltham in a lower tone.

Mr. Beverly, partially enlightened as to the pursuit of Perumal, understood the allusion. Gradually the conversation shaped itself into a discussion of the detective police system, and some stirring anecdotes were told of the Bow street runners of London, and finally of the Madras superintendent of police.

Every word of these the Eurasian servant Billy, standing behind his master's chair, heard and comprehended. Such stories had for him a perfect fascination, and his master had actually to call for another muffin before Billy saw that the plate was empty. Greatly mortified at his own negligence, he left the room.

"You may go too, Chinnian," said the Captain to the other servant in attendance. "Send Billy back when the letters come, and stay yourself for the muffin."

Before either servant could return, Waltham softly said: "I have had Billy sworn into the force for this special service. He has his genuine policeman's badge all ready to produce on the fit occasion."

Mr. Beverly remarked: "I could look him full in the face as he stood behind your chair, and his black eyes, I can assure you, sparkled with satisfaction."

Waltham rejoined: "Billy was *the* ally, and the only one, selected by Mahremuttu. Nor could I trust the whole to any policeman already in service, for there is not a man in the Illathapet police who knows Perumal by sight. Of course the fellows at Chinnacotta know him, but I distrust that gang; and though I think the peons just here are faithful, yet that vakeel of Ramasamy's, who has doubtless had a hand in throwing them off the scent so many times,

would be more likely to observe and thwart their movements."

Re-enter Chinnian with muffins and Billy with letters. "Ah! at last!" said the Captain, as his eye detected among other letters one of unmistakably Hindu authorship. He then dismissed the servants.

"Now, my dear Beverly, you can decipher this missive more readily than I. But skip the introduction by all means. I never read the first page of a Hindu's letter."

"If I pass over the first page, I omit the gist of the letter," said Mr. Beverly, glancing down the page. "Mahremuttu, you know, is not obsequious. I have often, when at Periacoil, observed his dignity. Besides, as Ryland's moon-shee and yours, he has learned how little the English care for high-flown Hindu compliments. See how brief his opening is. I dare say he is sincere in what he says."

As Beverly read, Waltham laughed, but yet he blushed as artlessly as a simple girl at the sug-

gestion of being deemed worthy^t of such lofty rhetorical figures.

At the second sentence of the letter proper, he exclaimed: "That means he has seen Perumal and given the money and message!" and farther on he said: "I am then to send Billy immediately. Well, since Colar is the place, he can go up in the mail-cart if I take him at once to Vattoor. And the same mail must carry a letter to Bangalore, asking that peons be sent from there to Billy's assistance."





CHAPTER XXII.

WHEN the mail-cart neared Colar, Billy clambered down from the seat beside the driver, and took from within his bundle of clothes. He was the only passenger. Ordinarily, in those days, the mail-carts of that route were small vehicles, not designed for the accommodation of even a single passenger, but constructed rather with a view to speed, in conveying the mail-bags.

Billy was unwilling to enter Colar in his ordinary servant's garb, much less would he wear his police badge. He therefore looked about for some place where he might assume a disguise. Not far off he saw the high walls of a Mohammedan burying-ground, which he could reach by passing through the fields without entering the village. On reaching the rear of the graveyard,

he found certain stones lying in such a position that he easily scaled the wall and dropped down inside, after which he began to untie his bundle. Of the clothes he already wore, he removed nothing but the turban, beneath which he had tucked up every stray lock, for Billy had allowed his hair to grow in European style for two or three years, and now found it would serve his purpose in more ways than one. He then drew on a pair of old trowsers and a ragged, dirty coat over his own proper garb. This was the first time he had ever worn European clothes of any sort, but he chose to pass through Colar in the guise of an East Indian beggar. These miserable creatures (of mixed blood) swarm over Southern India, under the character of pedestrians journeying to Madras, or Bangalore, or Bellary, or Pondicherry, or any other large city, which, however, they are careful never to reach, their object being to eke out a lazy existence on the gifts of travelers. They carry, usually, a petition drawn up in "dictionary English" of the most astonishing character, setting forth

their necessities, and sometimes bearing the names of their benefactors.

Billy completed his toilet by putting on a most disreputable old hat, and a pair of shoes from which his toes protruded very conspicuously. After this he hid the other contents of his bundle, and climbing upon a tomb sprang upon the wall and leaped down outside.

There is a public bungalow at Colar, where English travelers usually stop to take a meal of warm food. Toward this bungalow turned Billy, now the East Indian beggar, as it would be quite in character for him to hang about, waiting the arrival of some compassionate and benevolent traveler. He looked in every direction—ostensibly for a chance Englishman, but really for Mahremuttu, or, if it so fell out, for Ramasamy's party. However, it was not until he had eaten a meal in the bungalow kitchen, and had begun a second search, that he gained at last a distant glimpse of the moonshee's tall figure. It was rather difficult for the seeming beggar to obtain the recognition of his ally, so

strangely was he transformed. But at length a quiet conference was secured. Ramasamy, it appeared, had conceived fresh suspicions or experienced new terrors, for by extra speed he had contrived to pass through Colar one night earlier than the moonshee had reckoned on. It was therefore judged necessary for Billy to follow up the track at once, Mahremuttu consenting to await at Colar the arrival of the Bangalore peons, and put them in the way of overtaking Billy with the least possible delay.

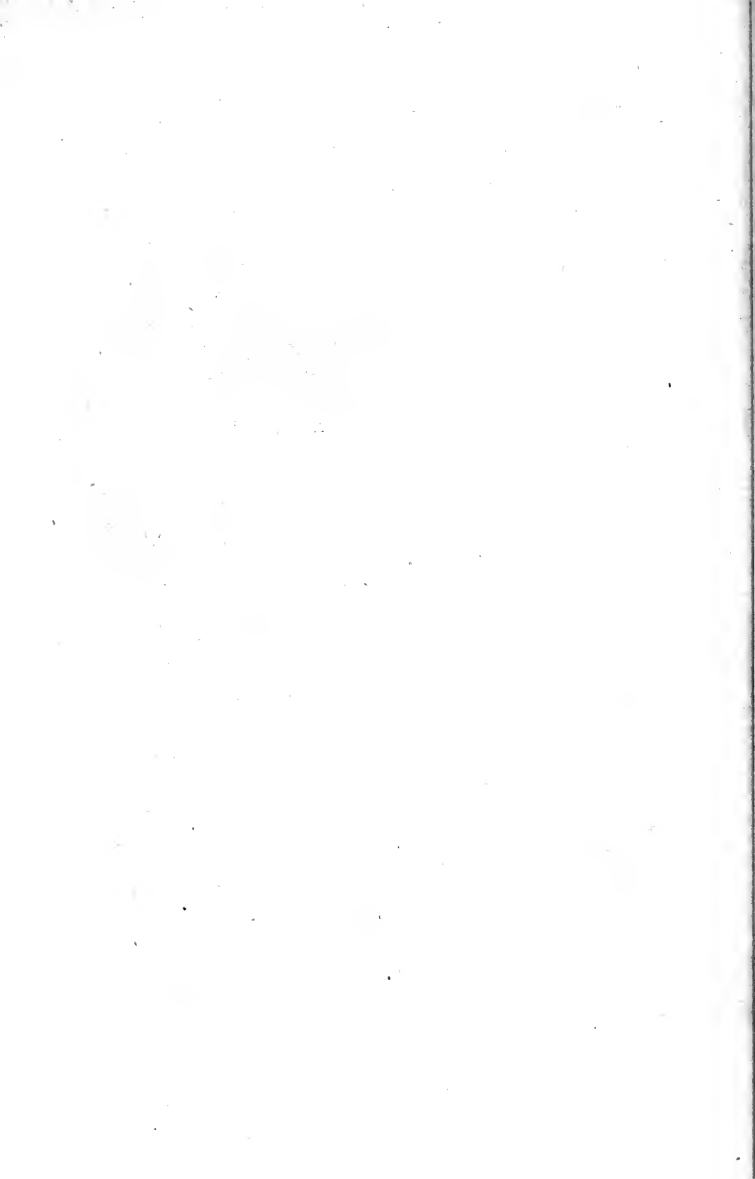
Billy accordingly retraced his steps toward the hiding-place of his bundle. It was now moonlight, and he once more scaled the graveyard wall without observation. But scarcely had he shed the shabby East Indian attire, when a devout Mohammedan, dressed in a long, thin muslin robe, wide red trowsers, and yellow, pointed slippers, entered the enclosure and trimmed the perpetual lamp upon a conspicuous tomb. Billy was thrilled with apprehension. He could make his retreat by mounting the tomb that had served as a stepping-ladder before; but suppose

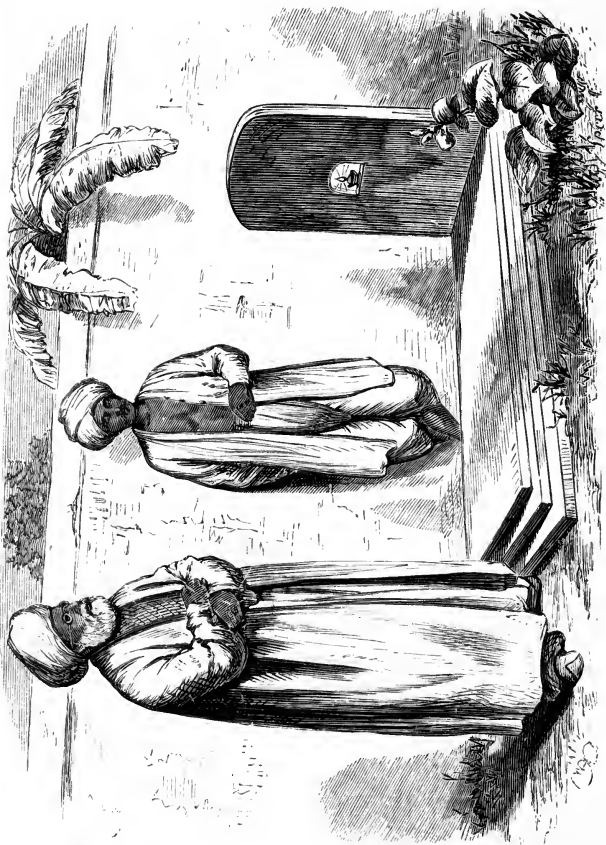
the least noise should attract the gaze of the Mohammedan; what would he say on seeing an "uncircumcised infidel" like Billy standing upon the tomb of a "true believer?" But time was precious, so Billy began the attempt. Alas! with a clatter down he came, and on rising met the startled Mussulman face to face. But the momentary scowl upon the Moorman's brow gave way to a different expression, and in a moment he said, "You are Captain Waltham's servant, and you have come hither in search of me."

Billy's emotion changed rapidly from anxiety to relief, and then to positive rejoicing. "Oh, Hakim (doctor)! is it you?" he exclaimed; "I need your aid so much! Then you really live in Colar?"

"Certainly," rejoined the other. "Were you seeking for me?"

Now Billy would not speak an untruth, and the fact was that never till this moment had he known where the Hakim lived. Yet his quick mind had seized on the possible advantages of his good-will in a region so largely Mohamme-





Billy and the Hakim.

Captain Waltham.

dan, and he was about to make known the case, when the thought occurred, "Shall I appeal to him in my character of a police-peon? No, for this man, born of a race that overran and conquered India at a former day, cannot specially care to aid the government that has in its turn overcome the Mohammedan rulers of subject Hindus. Better speak in my character of Captain Waltham's servant." So he began :

"I know, Hakim, that you have a high regard for my master."

"It is true," said the other. "I will not mention the deed by which your master first secured my lasting regard. But more lately he recommended me to his government as a vaccinator, and it is now my office to guard against the appearance of small-pox in this region."

"It was my master who sent me hither," resumed Billy; and once more he made a prudent pause to consider in which of its various aspects he should now present the case. That Perumal had abjured idolatry would so far recom-

mend him to the Hakim, for the Mohammedan creed is fiercely monotheistic. But how make evident Perumal's renunciation of idols without obtruding his choice of Christianity? And Billy knew that the mere mention of the name at which every knee should bow might raise a whirlwind of Mohammedan bigotry. "God is one God, and Mohammed is his prophet," the Hakim might reply: "Jesus, Mary's son, was a prophet like Moses or any other. I spit upon the idolatrous worship which exalts him into a divinity." No, the religious aspect of the case must be lightly touched if at all.

"You hesitate," said the Hakim. "Is it that you doubt the sincerity of my regard for your master? Since he knew me to be here, he perhaps even framed the message you were to bear. Why do you not repeat it?"

"Hakim," said Billy, "since you say my master knows your residence, I must suppose that only the suddenness with which he sent me prevented his recollecting that you were here and sending me to you for aid. But my first

thought on seeing you was that you would give me the help I need in carrying out my master's plans. Listen! Since we cannot be overheard in this quiet place, I will tell you here that some months ago my master went to law with a native whom he accuses of perjury. This perjured wretch has seized and carried off my master's chief witness, a boy fourteen years old. After months of searching we find that the witness is being carried through this region in a bullock-cart with his ankle chained to a log. The policemen, my coadjutors, should be here to-morrow morning; but it seems the villain has the start of us, having passed through this place last night."

"Well," said the Hakim, "I and my son will join you in instant pursuit, and if the villain resists he will find that hereabouts a Mohammedan crowd is easier raised than a Hindu rabble. Has he many accomplices?"

"He travels as quietly as possible, with only a single servant. With a pony strong and docile enough to carry both boy and log, we might even

aid the escape while the uncle and the servant are asleep. Besides, if it should seem best, I myself can wear a police-badge, which the authorities granted me for this special service. Here it is."

"That is as it may be," said the Hakim. He then went into some further details of a plan we need not mention here.

It was not, however, until past noon of the next day that the pursuers came in sight of Ramasamy's party. The distance from Colar was small, but time had been required for securing correct traces. Yet the march had led them farther from the Moorish population than the Hakim had reckoned on. It was therefore necessary to proceed with greater caution, and this afforded Billy the chance to attempt another of his dearly-loved disguises. This time he would be a Hindu religious beggar.

Ramasamy halted at dusk beside a tank sheltered by a grove of tulip trees. While Perumal as usual sat apart from the cooking operations, he observed a figure crouching behind

the earth embankment of the nearest rice-field. This dusky object was evidently waiting to catch Perumal's eye. When at length mute signals had been exchanged the object proceeded thus :

Still crouching so low behind the embankment as not to be seen from Ramasamy's point of view, it disrobed completely and took a bath in the thick, black mud, which always forms the soil of a rice-field. Strange taste, to bathe in mud when a tank was near ! Then it rubbed *in* rather than rubbed *off* the black slime, till the whole yellow body was quite besmeared and blackened as well as made very dirty. A liberal supply of mud was next rubbed into the bushy hair, which was then tangled and knotted into direst confusion. Next, a false beard was held up and so fastened on as to look, by twilight, quite like a real one. This beard was then bemired and tangled like the hair. Afterward a patch of rag eight inches square was tied to a string, and then both string and rag were dragged through the mire before being tied about the loins to constitute the one sole article of

dress. By this time, Perumal had said to himself, "Ah, Billy is a Sannyasi* now!" As for Billy, his reflections were these: "There! I am now as filthy as I need to be. They can't detect my yellow hue under all this mud. And for my dress, I can't bring myself to feign the exalted degree of sanctity which would require me to go quite naked." So, throwing a string of holy beads about his neck, and taking the empty half-shell of a cocoanut in one hand and a rude staff in the other, our saintly mendicant boldly appeared around the corner of the field and struck off in Perumal's direction. The servant's thoughts were elsewhere, but Ramasamy did look up as the shaggy object passed by Perumal. One brief sentence was uttered in an undertone, "Keep awake to-night." The boy replied, "I will," and the seeming mendicant passed down the path to meet Ramasamy, who poured a little dry rice into the holy man's cocoa-shell. Having received this offering, his saintly filthiness walked down the path and disappeared.

* *Sannyasi*, a class of religious devotees.



CHAPTER XXIII.

PERUMAL did keep awake, lying in the bandy, while his uncle and the servant, having spread their mats on the ground at either end, soon were fast asleep. Long before midnight, Billy and his Moham-medan allies cautiously drew near. Had Ramasamy and the servant waked, they would have been grappled with at once by Billy and the Hakim. But the worry and fatigue of the past thirty-six hours were perfect opiates to Perumal's jailers, and so the escape was effected with comparative ease. The Hakim's pony made no objection to the little log which was hoisted up and laid across his neck in front of his rider, Perumal. Then the party quietly withdrew into the shelter of a neighboring boulder, many of which are scattered over the ground for miles

beyond Colar. Next, Billy's friends produced an ample white sheet, which was thrown over Perumal's head, and suffered to hang down quite to his feet on each side, after the manner of a Mohammedan woman's veil. The Hakim's son led the pony, and the veiled figure might have passed for the Moor boy's mother. The log was hidden perfectly; nor did Perumal's manner of sitting on the pony create any difficulty, since Mohammedan women usually bestride a horse after the fashion of a man, their ample white veils hiding not only every feature of the face, but every limb of the entire figure on both sides of the horse. The return to Colar was undertaken by a short cut over the fields familiar to Billy's allies. There are no fences to interrupt such short cuts in India. At dawn the party had safely reached Colar. Perumal was hidden away where he might at leisure file off his fetter, and Billy went out to reconnoitre. The peons had arrived, but having started in pursuit by the circuitous way, were not now on hand.

"No matter," said Billy, "we shall do with-

out other help than my Musselman and his neighbors. Let me consult him once more."

But as Billy passed the public bungalow he saw a transit coach, and found himself accosted by the butler. "You are a gentleman's servant, I judge," said he, for Billy was now in his ordinary clothes. "Where's your master?"

Now Billy thought it as prudent not to mention his usual residence to a stranger, so he merely said, "My master is already, perhaps, on his way to Madras."

"By this road? I have seen to-day no transit coach except this one."

"Oh no; he goes from another place. I myself may travel to him by this road."

"Ah! and how are you going?"

Now Billy wondered at such inquisitiveness, so he replied with a question. "Why do you ask me?"

The butler rejoined: "A gentleman who came from Bangalore in yonder transit coach stopped here last night because his servant had cholera on the road. He is a kind master, for he sat

nursing the man until certain that a few days' rest would restore his health, But the master must reach Madras without further delay, and yet he dislikes to travel without a servant. I told him he was little likely to find a fresh one on the road; but just then I saw you passing by."

After a little reflection, Billy thought it worth his while to go and see the gentleman, who now sat in the bungalow considering his position in this light: if he could make good time, so as to arrive at the principal bungalows morning and evening, he would be sure of breakfast and dinner without carrying along his own servant. But if he happened to break down, or was delayed in any other way, he knew by sad experience what fare he would meet at the intervening smaller bungalows, where no butler attended. The bungalow-peon would get some native woman to make coffee as thick as mud, with boiled milk all full of smoke; and there would be curry made of coriander, so green and fresh as to taste like bugs. *Ugh!* what a nuisance that he must

go on alone! As his reflections reached this point he observed Billy standing before him and making a deep salaam. "Ah! are you wishing a servant's place with me?" asked the gentleman.

"I came to speak with you, sir," said Billy.

"Have you any recommendations with you?" asked the traveler.

"No, sir, for I am not seeking a place. I am here on an errand for my master, and if that were accomplished I could serve you on the journey down, as I must rejoin my master in Madras."

"Who is your master?"

"Captain Waltham, sir."

"Indeed! Captain Waltham of the Illathapet district?"

"Yes, sir," said Billy, beginning to scrutinize the traveler yet more carefully. He could not remember ever having seen his face, but Captain Waltham might have formed his acquaintance on some journey while Billy had remained at home in charge of the house. Or, after all, the trav-

eler might merely know Waltham's name as any Englishman may know that of almost every other English gentleman in India, by merely seeing it on the civil list or army list.

"I know your master," said the traveler, "and you ought to be an honest boy, else you do not deserve to serve him."

"Very true, sir," answered Billy, with sturdy sincerity.

("I like the fellow's looks," thought the traveler.) Then aloud: "I would willingly take you to Madras, but how is it that you speak of not being ready?"

"Sir, there is another boy whom I must safely send off to meet my master, before I can go myself."

"Very well, then let me take the other boy along. He is a servant too, is he not?"

"Oh, sir, I wish he could suit you," said Billy, "for my master would be a thousand times obliged to any one who would carry him safely down."

"This is strange!" thought the traveler.

Then he asked : " And can the other boy make a nice cup of coffee if necessary ? Was he Captain Waltham's servant ? "

" He was learning to be an engineer's assistant," said Billy. " My master never thought of training him as a servant. But I am hoping he may have learned by observation the duties of servants."

(" There is something more at the bottom of this," thought the traveler.) Then to Billy : " And why is your master in such haste about this young engineer's assistant ? "

Billy, intensely anxious, reluctantly ventured a farther item of information. " Sir, the lad is chief witness for my master in a lawsuit."

" Lawsuit ! " cried the traveler. " Can it be—but no, you say chief witness. However, can it be that this is the boy your master has raised the country to find ? I mean, the boy who broke his caste and was baptized ? "

" The same, sir," said Billy, with sparkling eyes.

" Then bring him to me," said the traveler.

"If the boy is trying to be a Christian, he shall have my help."

"But, sir," said Billy, "I have told you honestly this boy was not trained as a servant. If you find on trial that he cannot make good coffee, will you feel imposed on?"

"Good coffee! oh nonsense!" cried the traveler. "I want to help this poor lad to forsake his idols, and I should like to give your master pleasure. Bring the boy at once—I must be off!"

With amazing celerity Billy ran back to the Hakim's premises and prepared Perumal for the journey. Then, for the first time, he flung the peon's badge over his own shoulders, and in this manner escorted Perumal back to the public bungalow, followed by the Hakim and his son. Perumal's conference with his new protector was hurried, as the transit was all ready and the driver had settled into his seat. As Perumal came down the bungalow steps, bringing the traveler's dressing-case, he was pounced upon by Ramasamy. "What are you doing?" cried the

traveler to Ramasamy. "Who are you? Let go my servant and my goods."

The angry tone gave Perumal a fresh shock, for it struck a painful chord of his memory, and looking with enlightened eyes upon the traveler's face, he for the first time recognized, with a chill of despair, the very Englishman who, in a drunken fit, had chased him around the tank at Mr. Beaumont's. Poor Perumal! weary and jaded, ignorant of Captain Lee's change of character, he thought only of a new captivity, when the Hakim cried aloud, "Sir, this is the villain whom Captain Waltham accuses of perjury!" and Billy, who had stayed to gather the traveler's parcels, came flying to the rescue. The sight of Billy's police badge put the wretched Ramasamy to instant flight.

But Perumal hesitated, till Captain Lee said frankly: "Little brother, by all I can learn from Captain Waltham and Mr. Beverly, you are a boy whom I have met before. I was once a far more wicked man than your heathen uncle, but now I fear God. Can you trust me now?"

“Oh yes, sir,” said Perumal; and having held the transit door while Captain Lee got in, he clambered up beside the driver, and was rattled off toward Madras.

As for Billy, he hastened to carry the report of his success to Mahremuttu Moodely. This worthy, on learning that Perumal was really free from Ramasamy's clutches, lost all his anxiety about the health of his beloved father-in-law, and so far from proceeding in the direction of Bangalore, he made immediate arrangements for returning at once to Periacoil. Tired of traveling on foot, he bought a little trotting bullock, with a bridle of rope running through its nostrils and a little bell hanging round its neck. Seated astride this little beast, our tall friend, Mahremuttu, found his legs very much in danger of dragging on the ground. However, it was easier than traveling on foot.



CHAPTER XXIV.

SINCE Billy's departure, Waltham had been preparing for a visit to Madras, and was at length expecting to start within twenty-four hours, when a hasty line from Captain Lee, written at the next traveler's bungalow after leaving Colar, brought the welcome tidings of Perumal's rescue. The excitement caused by this news, added to Waltham's previous fatigue, occasioned a sleepless night. Long before morning he was perfectly convinced of his unfitness for beginning the journey at the expected time. Having yielded this point after some mental debate, it next occurred to him, "Suppose it should be no temporary detention. Suppose I should become seriously ill and never again rise from this bed?"

His will was already made, but it now seemed

to him that some alterations were desirable. Not that he really expected to die ; but, like any just man, he wished that his death, whenever it might occur, should not occasion harm or loss to any one.

With the first dawn Chinnian brought coffee to his master, the early hour having been fixed with reference to the journey. "I shall not start this morning, boy," said the Captain. "Take out the cup, and tell the cook to make some strong tea, as I am not well."

When Chinnian returned with tea, the Captain drank it in bed, and then, leaning on his elbow, wrote: "My dear Fanshawe, can you come to me immediately after coffee? I shall delay my journey a little, and would like to make certain alterations in my will, so as to have all right before leaving home. Something might happen to me on the journey, you know."

Half an hour after despatching this note, Waltham wrote another for the surgeon, and a third for Mr. Beverly. Hardly were these sent when

Mr. Fanshawe arrived, and was invited into Waltham's bedroom.

"My dear fellow! Not ill, I hope?"

"Only a trifle, I dare say; but I shall be more at ease and far more likely to mend if you will relieve my mind of one or two anxieties."

"Well?"

"I wish to provide for the education of a protégé of mine—a native boy of good caste who has lately become a Christian. And in case of my death I wish to give my friends Captain Lee and Mr. Hay the charge of this lad for a course of years."

"Anything else?"

"Yes. My sister is to arrive in the next ship, and I wish to ask my friends, the Hays, to act as her temporary guardians in case I should die before our uncle's return to India. That is all. And by the time you are ready I shall have two witnesses on hand."

Mr. Fanshawe went to work immediately, and had scarcely laid down his pen when he observed Dr. Hart and Mr. Beverly on the verandah.

"My dear Waltham," cried Fanshawe, "I hope you have no dismal forebodings?"

"How so?"

"When a man summons to his bedside the representatives of law, medicine and divinity, I call such a meeting an ominous conjunction."

"Not at all," said Waltham. "Were I expecting to die (which, however, I am not), the prospect would be far from dismal. Do I look gloomy? Feeling rather ill, I sent for the doctor to help me up again, and the clergyman I invited merely because he is my intimate friend, and might serve as second witness to my will if you should desire. As to Mr. Beverly's spiritual counsels, I tried to profit by them long ago. It is not my manner to defer the affairs of my soul till I am attacked with illness."

This topic being a gloomy one to the worldly-minded Fanshawe, he was glad to have its discussion cut short by the entrance of the gentlemen. The doctor's salutation was, "Well, Waltham, what are you in bed for?"

"I am waiting your leave to get up. Look at

me now and say if I can start for Madras to-night."

After some examination the doctor said, "You are not very ill, I think. But wait till I can break up this slight fever. After two or three days the change of air on the journey would be likely to build you up. At present, while the fever is on, the fatigue of travel might pull you down beyond the point from which you could recover."

"What can *I* do for you?" asked Mr. Beverly.

"Write to my friends the Hays, please, and ask them to receive my sister if the ship arrives before I am fit for the journey. And perhaps Mr. Fanshawe wishes you to witness my will."

"What!" said the doctor. "Have you been at work so early in the morning, and with this fever on?"

"Yes," laughed Waltham; "I could not rest till that care was off my mind. I knew you would hate to consent, so I relieved you of the

responsibility by sending for Fanshawe a good half hour before summoning you."

The doctor shook his head disapprovingly.

"Are you ready for my signature?" asked Waltham. But on receiving the pen he first scribbled some lines on a sheet of note-paper.

"More rashness and willfulness!" said the doctor. "You only increase the fever."

"Just a line to my sister," said Waltham.

"No need of alarming her," said the doctor.

"Nor have I said anything to frighten her. Read my note for yourself, Hart."

The surgeon, having looked it over, admitted that it could do no harm.

"In this, as in everything else," remarked Mr. Fanshawe, "our friend contrives to have his own way. Like a spoiled girl, he wheedles us out of all he wishes."

Waltham's only answer was a whimsical glance of reproach and grief.

"Oh there! I beg your pardon," said Fanshawe, "and my doing so is fresh proof of what I say. We give you everything you desire, and

cannot even expostulate with you but we are driven to think ourselves hard-hearted brutes for doing so. There, sign, please, for I must really be going."

When the will had been put away, Dr. Hart said, "And now, Waltham, are you ready to be quiet?"

"Yes, really and truly."

"Will you try to sleep after this powder? Or shall we ask Mrs. Beverly to come and keep you quiet?"

"No, she has her schools to look after. I really will try to be still. You can instruct Chinnian to send privately for you if he sees that I am not obeying orders."

The clergyman and the surgeon left in company, Mr. Fanshawe having preceded them by a few minutes. On the way home, Dr. Hart remarked: "Do you know I think Fanshawe not far from right in saying that Waltham contrives to get his own way like a coaxing girl."

The other smiled, and Dr. Hart went on:

"You may think me fanciful, but I have often said to myself that Waltham must have inherited more of his mother's traits than of his father's. I grant he is all a man should be in courage and energy, and this I credit to his father. From his mother it must have been, I think, that he derived a variableness of mood covering the most absolute faithfulness of heart. This latter combination I think a decidedly feminine cast of character."

Mr. Beverly smiled once more, and then said: "I used in former years to observe at times in Waltham a certain waywardness—unreasonableness if you will—after which he would be as frankly contrite as a penitent child. But of this fitfulness he is more the master than when I first knew him. Looking at Waltham's progress in self-conquest, I often think how, from our present imperfect and sometimes unlovely natures, the Great Sculptor's hand is chiseling out the angels that we are to be. Faults and blemishes remain, as yet, on every statue, but all these the Sculptor's chisel will surely chip off by due

degrees. Even here the eye of human love may often discern, under much unloveliness, the perfect form that lies hidden beneath unsightly excrescences, and may foresee just what the beauty is to be when all is done."

There was a pause. At length the doctor said: "For myself, I owe to Waltham a debt I never can repay. You know, better than I can tell you, that he is as artlessly, unaffectedly *real* in his religion as in everything else. When I first came here your preaching, Mr. Beverly, made me ill at ease. I tried to feel, however, that your standard had need be high because of your profession, and that your sedateness came with your years. But in Waltham I found a man of my own age, my own temperament and my own temptations. His whole life lured me to seek its key, its mainspring. You remember his long illness just after my arrival here. I used sometimes to doubt whether I could bring him through. Not because of his bodily symptoms; but when I looked into his eye I seemed to see a human soul poisoning itself on the border

between two worlds, and looking forward to better things than this life can offer!"

"I remember," said the missionary, "that in one of my visits to him during that illness, I read aloud the account of Christian and Hopeful crossing the river of death and going through the gates into the Celestial City. When I had finished, Waltham remarked that once life had seemed to him, as it did to Bunyan, like a continual progress *toward* death; but that lately it had seemed to him more like a pathway, always running along *beside* the boundary which divides this world from the next. And at times," he said, "we pass one of the many entrances, and if the door stand ever so little ajar, we peep through and see the brightness and long to be there; but the door is suddenly closed in our faces, and we sigh to find ourselves shut out. Yet, resting in God's will, we follow on close beside the wall, thinking perhaps the next door we come to will be opened for us, or, if not, that at least we are close to the boundary, and near, very near to the friends within."



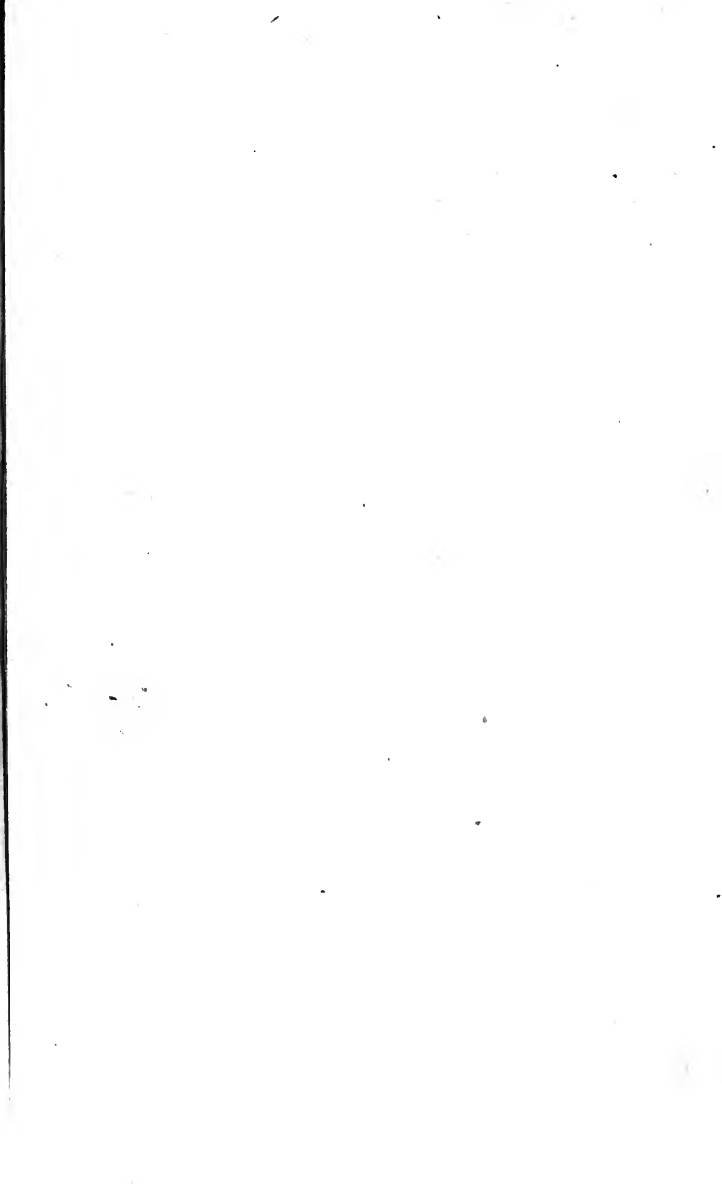
CHAPTER XXV.

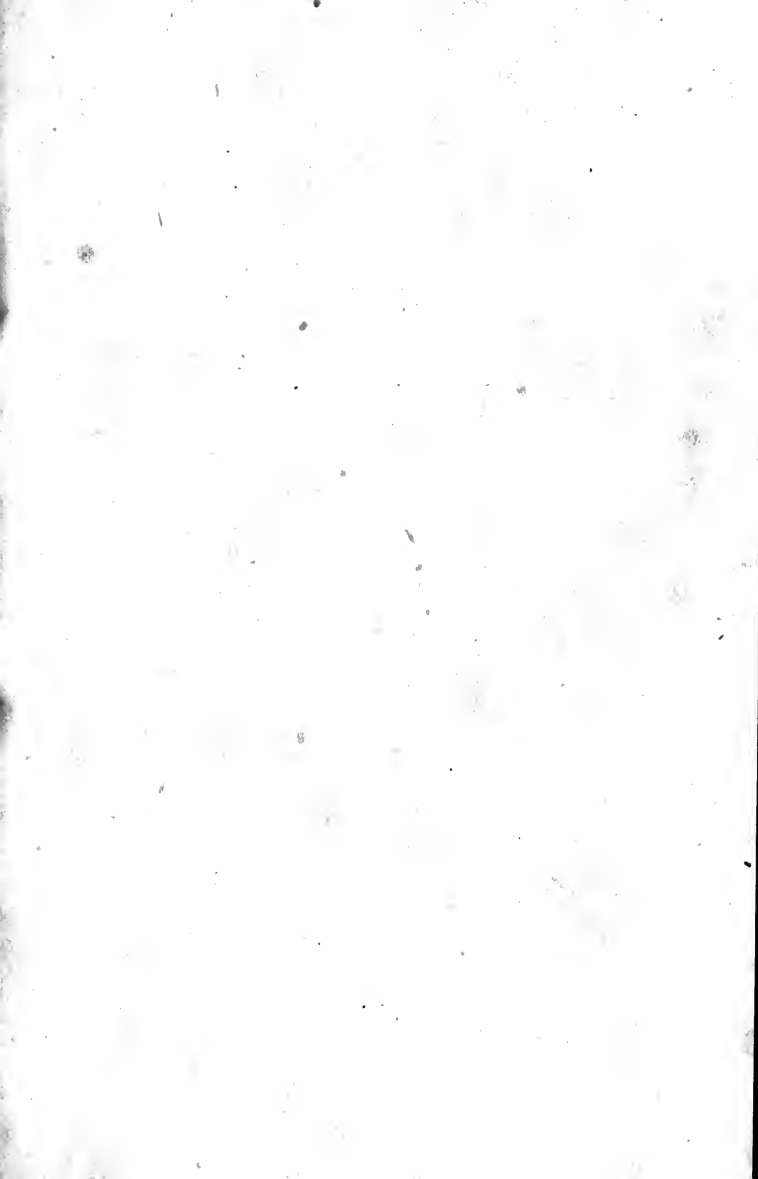
THOUGH Perumal had now been in Madras some days, the novelty had not worn off. All he saw had interested him from the hour when Captain Lee's transit coach drove through the city gates into the walled portion of Madras. There were denser crowds than Perumal had ever seen before. He could recollect his feelings when first coming out upon the broad esplanade, and looking off upon the boundless stretch of waters forming the Bay of Bengal. He had stared at the shipping lying at anchor in the famous roads, and had been amazed at the surf, breaking with such dangerous force upon the long stretch of unsheltered coast. He had wondered at the tall lighthouse, and had gazed at the English flag waving over the walls of Fort St. George, till finally he had found the

transit turning into the very fort itself. There, among many novel sights and sounds, he felt safe under Captain Lee's protection while waiting the arrival of Captain Waltham.

At length, one morning very early, Captain Lee took him out through a beautiful suburb of the city to the house where Waltham was expected at sunrise. They entered the compound and were received upon the verandah by the lady of the house. The gentleman, had gone out the day before to meet Waltham and escort him in.

And now was heard the measured chant of the bearers, and Perumal ran down to meet the palanquin. But Waltham slumbered still, and seeing it the boy hushed his glad outcry and walked quietly up the avenue. Forgetting that illness and fatigue can give to sleep almost the semblance of death, Perumal's heart was smitten with a sudden fear. But when the palanquin touched ground, Waltham woke and greeted every one with his own old smile. Perumal gave one long sigh of relief, and gazed content.







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